

Reaching Solid Ground With Yourself



Honolulu Kuilei Cliffs Beach Park. Photo by Lanvi Nguyen.

INTELLIGENCE 2020 for Capricorn

When you arrive at the winter solstice of 2020 — the day that the Sun enters your sign — you will have come through many changes, challenges and trials, and with any grace at all, you will have arrived at your own truth. You will know your priorities. You will know what is valuable to you. You will know something about your worth to the world. And you'll be able to put those values to work for yourself and for your community. Indeed, the process of getting from here to there is specifically about getting lots of practice doing so. And you will have undergone the journey that it takes to get from here to there.

On that winter solstice, Jupiter and Saturn arrive in Aquarius, your sign of personal wealth, your values, your talents, and your guiding principles. As your 2nd solar house (or 2nd by rising sign), Aquarius also represents the tools of your trade, and the value that you put upon your work — monetary and otherwise (don't forget the otherwise; that's most of the scenario). Planets together making up more than 2,300 times the size of Earth (with many Earth-like satellites) will align in their once-per-generation

meeting. This represents a point of completion for you, and a point of commencement as well. It's as if you come into an inheritance from yourself.

You could have access to all of these assets today; you already do — what is yours is yours, even if you have not discovered it, or learned how to put it to work for yourself. Yet you are on the way to realizing your potential, although it may not feel like that now. You may, at times, be overwhelmed with doubts. Your astrology is describing a deep inner reconciliation process that you've been going through for about a year, and will be going through for another two years (a tad less) while Saturn is transiting your sign or ascendant.

This is a kind of culmination stage, though, of a much longer era that began in the summer of 2008, when Pluto entered your sign or ascendant. This commenced a phase of shifts in the ground of your being, and of turbulence coming from a source that you could not identify — and of what seem to be perpetual enforced changes. Pluto moving through Capricorn is earthquake astrology; think of tectonic plates shifting underground: when they crunch and collide, they rearrange the shape of things on the surface.

Therefore, the changes that you're going through are the product of a much deeper, usually invisible process. You are seeing, feeling and most often addressing the outer results. It's time to focus more consistently on your inner process, which you could describe as character development in the most elemental sense of the phrase.

Saturn Arrived in Capricorn in December 2017

Saturn, the ruling planet of Capricorn, arrived in your sign in mid-December 2017. Saturn has a 29-year cycle, spending a little under three years per sign; it's been a while since it was with you. It is almost always a benefit to have your ruling planet in your sign, no matter what inaccurate or misguided things people may say about Saturn.

Adding Saturn to the mix of your current astrology, several new elements are present. One is a time factor. Saturn is the lord of chronological time, and its presence indicates a sense of imminence. This is particularly true with Saturn approaching its conjunction to Pluto on Jan. 12, 2020. This aspect has the sensation, particularly in Capricorn, that time is running out. It may feel like a sense of lurking pressure, as if you must get something done or meet a specific goal — or else face a consequence. If you feel that way, it's time to slow down and ask yourself some questions.

What is this about? What are you trying to do? Have you consciously designed a time plan, or is this operating below the boards? Part of the teaching of Saturn is to learn how to use time wisely: how to pace yourself, schedule yourself, and allocate time for different purposes. And then you must know when to let go and go with the flow.

In the wider sense of time, our lives in Western culture tend to lack defined points of transition; everyone is kind of winging it along the path to supposed maturity. We have a few markers, such as "learned how to walk," "graduated high school," "got married," "got divorced" (with the latter representing the one true point of maturity, as far as I can tell). What are you using for benchmarks of your progress? How do you remind yourself what you've accomplished and where you are? And how, then, can you assess the sensation of urgency that you may be feeling?

One theme lurking behind the pressure might be mortality, a Saturn theme, as is the maturing process. I would propose that maturity does not happen unless one has a conscious relationship with their personal mortality (and does not project it onto the world, such as in the form of the Rapture). Pluto is also one of the lords of human mortality, and now both are in your sign.

With Saturn approaching Pluto (a god of the underworld), this will emerge as both an individual and a collective issue. Please don't be too distracted by the collective level (meaning religious notions such as the Rapture, which is more pervasive than you may imagine, even if people are not talking about it). For you, the individual level is more important, as this is happening in your sign or rising sign.

Saturn also adds a sense of personal responsibility to the mix for you. Pluto can have an abstract quality and lack a tangible feeling. Usually Pluto works below the level of liminality. It has a "shit happens" feeling that can seem remote from the accessible world of human causes and effects. With Saturn in the picture, a sense of personal karma can emerge as a theme, of one's personal investment and involvement. Keep your sense of proportion here: this really is about what you do with your life, rather than the fate of the Earth.

Two other planets are involved in this conjunction — Jupiter and Ceres. Both of these say you must tap your wisdom and use what you know. Do not hang out on the hazy edge of almost paying attention. Guide your awareness into full consciousness as a voluntary and willing act. Teach yourself how to use what you know, and constantly notice and test your assumptions.

Pluto in Capricorn has been about as personal as the tectonic plates sliding around the crust of the Earth. When we add Jupiter and Saturn, though, we add a distinctly

personal dimension, particularly for you, who are born under a Saturn-ruled sign. Saturn focuses and contains the issues for you, and can bring them to the level of deeply personal questions. Be sure to allow your questions to stand for a while, rather than rushing to answer them. No answer is much preferable to false ones; there is much more potential.

Saturn is also providing you with a resource, or — better said — access to your available resources by taking them out of the abstract realm. Saturn is providing you with a physical, observable connection to who and what you are. Yet this, too, adds to your sense of personal responsibility, as you are now directly engaged in a process that, for a long time, you could take an arms-length perspective on.

Now, you're being drawn closer into your own journey, and there is no room for hesitation. Saturn demands or compels commitment, which is in truth coming from inside of you. The more you connect to your commitment as an inner process, the better use you will be able to make of it, and the less you will feel subjugated by the events of your life.

Saturn conjunct Pluto represents your process of taking over your evolutionary journey, and your search for your soul's calling. One potential struggle here is the feeling that you must give up something to get closer to this, and finally to make contact, and this is true. Yet in the spirit of Saturn, you may discover that you are giving up what you don't want and what you don't need. You could save yourself plenty of grief by asking yourself at every juncture such questions as: What do I want? What do I need? Why am I doing this? Do I want this?

You can use the sensation of "time running out" as incentive to accelerate your process of sorting out. Saturn is here to teach you to live like it matters; like your choices matter. You might note that what you are choosing and un-choosing are in part related to you, though if you look deeper, you will see that they are more closely related to your family of origin.

Part of your journey involves differentiating your sense of acceptance by your family (whether true or imagined) from what you need to do with your life. This expands into anything that gives you a sense of belonging, of safety or of community, related specifically to where you seek your identity. It is likely that you feel "more like yourself" when you are closer to your origins, and yet this creates a false comfort zone. Within this zone, you're more hemmed in than you are free to explore your potential. This is associated with the fear of disapproval, and the fear of rejection by your tribe (or what passes for one).

As long as you are invested in what you think “they” think of you, the more hemmed in you will feel. Fortunately you have some assistance here.

Comment About Jupiter in Capricorn

Jupiter joins the grouping of planets in your sign on Dec. 2, 2019, where it will be for one year. Jupiter has a number of potential effects, one of which is the sensation that you want to expand your horizons. That might feel like restlessness, or wanting to stretch, or being reminded how boxed in you’ve felt by Saturn. Take advantage of this. Jupiter brings the sea to the sea-goat (you). This is an invitation to go to the ocean or visit a high place, and in fact look out at the horizon (that will serve you well in any event).

Jupiter has another property: that of magnifying what is already there. Whatever material you’re working with, whatever changes you’re going through, and whatever struggles you might be engaging with. Take advantage of this. Use this magnification power to see what you’re really experiencing and feeling, even if it’s in an exaggerated way. Under this astrology, your problems or situations may seem larger, but you’re getting that enhanced look to help you address them.

Keep your perspective.

The Chiron-Pholus-Salacia Pattern

The archetypal chart for Capricorn (also called a solar chart) has Aries on your 4th house. Where we have Aries is someplace where we’ll tend to make an investment in our identity — and to seek identity. This differs from sign to sign and from chart to chart.

The 4th is the zone of security seeking; it’s the aspect of your being that wants to know there is a bed waiting for you in your family home. It’s the part of you that wants daddy’s protection. Aries means you seek your identity here more than most people do; you might say this is the homebody aspect of your being. We all have a 4th house, though we don’t all identify with it so much.

It has been written that Capricorns are especially sensitive to their relationships with their fathers, and here we have an idea why (as the 4th is connected to father, his lineage, and his real estate). This works conceptually as well as physically; we could look for what some call daddy issues in the 4th. (I prefer the word *themes*, though you can spot an issue because it arises over and over, and is connected to a hang-up of

some kind — meaning a persistent snag, delay or replay.)

Chiron spent part of 2018 in Aries, returning for the first time since it last entered Aries in 1968. Then late in 2018, it temporarily retrograded back into Pisces (where it is at the time of this writing) and will return to Aries on Feb. 18. If you're old enough to have experienced this transit before, you might check back into your personal history as it contrasts with your family history. If you were born between 1968 and 1976, you are now entering your Chiron return, the most significant of both the Chiron transits and the key life transits (this takes place around age 50-51).

In any event, Chiron's presence in Aries is meaningful in that it pushes a particular issue — that of distinguishing yourself — and this means both from your family and from what tends to make you feel safe. Wherever Chiron is in your chart, or is transiting, you will tend to stand out, by hook or by crook, whether you like it or not.

You will discover yourself to be different, and experience yourself as such. This is not supposed to be comfortable territory. In fact it may be distinctly uncomfortable for a while, as you realize that you don't belong in a particular comfort zone, related to the expectations of others — which you can always trace back to your family for easy access to the core data. But do not take for granted how easy it is to "feel accepted" because you're around people who know a particular aspect of you, which is not really you. In that sense, you are "protected" (or "safe") from deeper exploration.

You are then likely to discover that such a comfort zone has nothing to do with anyone else. It only seems like it does; the comfort zone is in your emotional body, and your mind. The action of Chiron will be, at first, aimed at making this distinction and getting you to take on the matter of your own identity fully, as apart from "what other people think" — particularly your family and what you project onto them.

There is a noteworthy phenomenon that sometimes happens in group therapy. When someone is a focus of the process, people in the group shake out as the person's different family members, and the drama is replicated on the spot. The take-away here is that we contain our family of origin through various shades of neurological imprinting (including memory, but also deeper). It is this level of imprinting that Chiron moving through your 4th place, Aries, will be illuminating. It's as if you go into the space.

Rather than seeming to have no other option than conform to what is expected of you, or who you are accepted to be, you're likely to feel a variety of shades of being different, and even touching the edges of being unacceptable. Let's take a clue from

Hakomi therapy: you don't need to go too deep into the seeming lack of acceptability, the notion or the associated emotions: you merely need to get close enough to feel its heat and its distinct sense of alienation. You only need a reminder of what you once went through and how deep the fear of unacceptability can go. You don't need to get lost in these feelings, though.

Making peace with who you are implies making peace with being unacceptable. It's essential that these feelings and fears be contacted and acknowledged rather than buried. A whole diversity of feelings may come up — Chiron is famous for its ability to access ancestral material, and provides the spiritual resources to help you process it. Getting your DNA done would merely be scratching the surface here; you may be able to make contact with what actually happened to your predecessors.

While Chiron can bring up any subject under the Sun, there is already a long-term visitor in Aries, called Salacia. My current (and primary) delineation of this point involves sexual maturity. We in American society and to some extent many other parts of "advanced" societies experience a combination of sexual disinformation, confusion and struggle with growth. It's taboo to focus on this subject — particularly in a family context, which is weird, since sex makes families.

We are all familiar — at least in theory, or from the movies, or from actually doing it — with the process of "coming out" to one's family. It is an important part of the process of getting real about who you are. I think that the coming-out process, in our current age, puts queer folk at an advantage, in that this get-real moment about sexuality is essential in the maturing process.

While in many places this has become less dramatic, in that being gay is now considered normal, that is not true everywhere. However, this whole domain is especially difficult for heterosexuals, given the taboo on discussing sex within a family; many families dispense entirely with even the most rudimentary sex education, while refusing to allow the school system to perform this function, either. I think the situation goes a lot deeper, to the point where people within families have to hide their true sexuality from just about everyone (sisters may be an exception, to a degree).

Salacia addresses the matter of what is appropriate. In our current moment either nothing is, or anything can be deemed inappropriate. That will not wash, for you. You must make these determinations, both in your own conduct and that of others, without being reactionary.

Hiding is the potential problem, and one which Chiron conjunct Salacia will confront you with the need to reveal. Remembering that at this stage of your life, family is in

your mind as much as in physical reality (remember the group therapy metaphor), what we're really talking about is hiding your sexuality from yourself, based on strictures placed upon you during your time with your family of origin.

There is *always* a sexual dimension to one's family of origin experience. Babies come from sex and the result is a family of one kind or another. The sexual dimension may also involve people being judgmental of you, or it may involve transgression; it might be friendly and positive, though there is always a sexual "story" involving one's family. The question is, what is that story? How did you hear it? To what extent have you embellished it? How has it changed over time? How would others tell it? How close to the surface can you bring the underlying reality? You're not necessarily looking for pathology; everything counts.

The way these experiences translate into current life is that, for example, it's often possible to expand into your sexuality, or a sexual experience, right up to the point of worrying or fearing what mother/father/someone would think. (The usual response is guilt.) Also, the way that conjugal relationship patterns (i.e., with your lovers) are often replays of emotional patterns with parents offers another clue.

Currently, the topic of sexual abuse is trending in the United States. What I've noticed is how little discussion there is of what happens within the family. Everything is focused on the workplace and the social environment. The conditions in the family are not in the discussion, though the family of origin is the origin of all sexual material — and that is what Chiron conjunct Salacia will be unraveling for you this year and well into the future. If you remember that Chiron emphasizes where and how you are different, pay attention to that — including your fear of being different, your fear of being outcast, your fear of "what if they knew," and all manner of shame or guilt that may arise.

Let's Add Pholus to the Equation

There is a third planet to this pattern. Pholus has recently entered your sign, where it will be for the next 22 years. This is longer than Pluto spends in any one sign. Pholus is a centaur, in the same class as Chiron, which gives it one thing in common at least: it's part of a healing process. While all the centaurs address ancestral material, Pholus in particular addresses matters going back four generations (including your own). This ties into your Chiron-Salacia transit through the 4th — the house that covers ancestry — and completes a pattern involving all three points, which will be in a close aspect all year.

While Pholus moves slowly, its action is fast: it is reactive. It can have the action of revealing things that were hidden (one of its modes of action involves the lid coming off). And you must take special care, particularly in the early years of this transit, not to be reactive — while you're getting accustomed to the energy. You are currently under the influence of Saturn, which can feel like pressure, or being over-contained/constrained. Your impulse to break free or burst out will be strong at times, and that's when you have to pay special attention. One thing you will need to get used to is being more influential than you think, even in some of the seemingly small or minor things that you do.

Pholus is the planet whose process includes the *small cause with the big effect*. You must therefore become the master of small causes: of the seemingly minor influences that can make a significant difference. Dial back your efforts and your projection of yourself. Apply yourself gently to situations, rather than with a conquering spirit. You are not under good astrology to be a social justice warrior, though it may be tempting. You are, however, under excellent astrology, borrowing a line from Bono, to remember that "I can't change the world, but I can change the world in me."

A Caution About Projection

Speaking of projection, your charts contain a caution about this. In psychology, projection is seeing in others what you have not yet identified in yourself. This is slippery territory, particularly with Pholus in the house. The way to handle the possibility of projection is to cease and desist from accusing anyone of anything. This may not be easy.

We live in times when being judgmental is the national sport, allegedly a mark of purity, a signal of virtue, a statement of power — it's seen as anything but what it is, which is merely judgment, and which is almost always projection. Yet it's become a cultural mania, particularly in the age of social media, when anyone can say anything anonymously and face no consequences for it — indeed, these days, social approval rains down on those who judge. I am not suggesting that you do this. I am saying that it's a cultural game currently being played, and a dangerous one; and your astrology, in my view, is insisting that you process your opinions rather than placing them onto others.

Pholus could do a lot more than "place." Pholus can represent the uncontrolled release — and it's essential that you be able to contain, discipline and direct your energy, in whatever form it might take. The two essential sides to Pholus, irrespective of subject matter, are 1. Small cause, big effect (the shot heard around the world, small error

leads to big problem, homeopathy) and 2. A kind of explosive or torrential power that can be unleashed, and keep going and going seemingly to no end. Hence, keep the notion of “anger management” in mind. Learning objectivity is not easy, and it’s a demanding mental and physical task, but it will serve you well. Question your assumptions and your perceptions. Consider that, as A Course in Miracles says, “Projection makes perception.” This is a difficult challenge to grasp, though in the end, it’s testimony to the power of your mind — power that you must harness for your own good.

When Chiron returns to the 4th house to stay, it will enter the square between Pholus in Capricorn and Salacia in Aries. When a faster-moving planet enters an aspect pattern, it can set off the pattern. On many different accounts, this will tap into a well of ancestral material (Chiron, Pholus, Capricorn and the 4th all address the theme of ancestral, and the effect will be multiplied.) The Pholus effect of “three generations” combined with Chiron’s ability to bring things to light and the sexual maturity issues of Salacia could be, well, explosive. And what comes through might have absolutely nothing at all to do with you. You could be channeling your great-grandmother’s religious anxiety over the one orgasm she almost had, or your grandfather’s indignation that his daughter wanted to go on a date with a boy he didn’t approve of, or whatever — including much worse.

As Marina, one of my housemates at Miracle Manor, would always say, “Be conscious!” It was always annoying and amusing in equal measure.

Meanwhile, You Have a Sexual Truth

I’ll say it again: meanwhile, you have a sexual truth. There is an underlying reality to who you are. That’s a reality to what you want, what you’ve done, the nature of your desire, the nature of your guilt and shame, and your tropism for sexual growth; your desire to get off juuuuust the way you want. Cheers to that — to acknowledging your psychological and emotional and relational nuances.

All of us semi-awake types know that all of this exists within us, as knowledge, as experience or as potential, but how to get there is not listed in Google Maps. That’s a good thing, because those fools always forget to include in the directions that you’re going over a bridge (they just list the interstate number and call good), and getting to where you want to be is all about crossing bridges.

And it’s about tunnels too, and climbing over natural features in your inner landscape. *This is a discussion about your values.* That is the destination on 12/21/20 —

remember that. Your values are nothing until you inform them with your sexual feelings. Your sexual feelings begin with how you feel about you, as a sexual being, which means a creative being, which means BEING. I am aware I'm saying this in an era when perfect people are supposed to be unsullied by sexuality; in a time when people are paying money for drugs that make them hormonally non-binary, or, you could say, neutral. There is nothing neutral about you, and yet this meme of being or presenting oneself as asexual is potent right now. In parallel is presenting oneself as hypersexual but being intimidated by one's own feelings and one's own life force: the creativity to push oneself into existence and participate. The extent that this depends upon being sexually connected to yourself, and available to whom you choose, is underestimated in our era, when feelings make people uncomfortable — whether our own or those of others.

The thing between us and being is, lots of the time, guilt and shame; and their halo, which is embarrassment. There's something self-reaffirming about these emotions, which is that they re-affirm themselves because it feels wrong to do something about them. Capricorn is famous for its property of being a battery for these feelings. And they are not merely emotions. Guilt and shame perpetuate all of the taboos that hold together the very worst institutions, instincts and impulses of our society.

This is the veil within yourself that you are being called upon to penetrate. The teaching from tantric wisdom is to go toward your embarrassment rather than away from it. That is where you find the juice — your creativity, your passion, your desire, your courage, your strength. Once you discover this as a palpable experience, you will be able to multiply it through your life and apply this approach many different ways, in nearly any circumstance. You will be free of the shame that binds you.

The Pluto-Eris Square, from Capricorn to Aries

In the Aries reading, I developed a theme that I've been working on since the naming of Eris in 2006 — the impact of digital technology, artificial intelligence and robotics on our self-concept and ideas about the meaning of the body. You can also [read more about it here](#). I have documented that much of what is happening is working through the sign Aries, a zone of consciousness which factors deeply into your astrology in these years. In my analysis above, I've commented mostly on Chiron and Salacia, though there is more.

I can sum up the main effects in a paragraph written a few years back by Eric McLuhan, son of the 20th century philosopher Marshall McLuhan: "The body is everywhere

assaulted by all of our new media, a state which has resulted in deep disorientation of intellect and destabilization of culture throughout the world. In the age of disembodied communication, the meaning and significance and experience of the body is utterly transformed and distorted.”

It is likely that the senseless chaos we are seeing in the United States and other places in the world today is the direct result of the transformation and distortion of our relationship to our bodies — or, closer to the point, being *pushed out of body*. Much of this effect is described by way of Eris in Aries, which began in the late 1920s with the advent of radio. Now, with robots doing much of our thinking (GPS, Alexa, Siri, news feeds that keep us in bubbles, etc.) we are pushing into total psychic chaos.

This is primarily affecting your sense of security, your grounding, your emotional stability and your ability to stay focused on your first home — your body. Yoga might help a little, though there can still be a mind-body disconnect in yoga (generally propagated by its disregard of sexuality and over-emphasis on the body, rather than the spiritual path). One of Chiron’s roles will be to pull your focus into the mind-body nexus rather than one or the other.

While that is going on, Pluto in your sign will make a series of squares to Eris in your 4th house, Aries. Pluto, considered a slow-mover, is the faster of the two planets; it’s the protagonist. For you, Pluto in Capricorn represents your growth process, your evolutionary process; your rearrangement of your reality from the inside out. This same astrology has been having a profound destabilizing effect on all of society. And this is about to connect directly to Eris in Aries, another symbol of destabilization.

You face a personal question here: how are you responding to this state of affairs? How are you connecting with, working with, or repelled by, the state of society right now? Any process involving Pluto can feel like molting — a metamorphic change from one state to another, requiring total surrender. To go from one state of being to the other — the very change you seek — you will at some point need to let go into the process, uncertain of the outcome. You have, no doubt, done this several times, particularly during the 2012 era (Uranus square Pluto).

What you are experiencing today is more urgent and more focused, yet you can learn plenty from what you experienced seven or so years ago. Additionally, you gathered information and spiritual resources in another crucial era: Chiron in Capricorn, between late 2001 and 2005 (the 9-11 era, which has many resemblances to our own time astrologically). You can inventory your experiences and life lessons from that time and come up with many forgotten treasures, in the nature of, “If I could do this over, this is

what I would do.” You now have an opportunity for a do-over, though the heat and pressure are much higher, and your emotions will of course correspond.

Here is a metaphor that may help you: Imagine you are descending a very long, narrow, dangerous stairway in total darkness. Yet there are two banisters. To one side is fear. Be aware of your fear, and let it guide you. To the other side is your sexuality: all of your eroticism, including your desire, your guilt, your shame, your embarrassment and your drive to connect with yourself and with others. Stick with these feelings rather than running from them. They all describe your changing relationship to your body; they describe your growth process; they describe your state of being.

There is no telling how you’re actually going to get from where you are today, to where you will be on Dec. 21, 2020. That path is for your steps alone. Yet it is certain you will get there, and that when you arrive, you will be grounded more deeply in your existence, your purpose, and your abilities. For now, do not pretend. Do not claim wisdom you don’t have. Stay in your confrontation with the unknown.

Jupiter Conjunct Saturn

Let’s end with a few more thoughts about Jupiter conjunct Saturn, our point of destination. This is one of the most dependable “turning of an era” events, and it arrives synchronously with Saturn conjunct Pluto and Pluto square Eris. All of these events occur within the span of one year. Jupiter-Saturn is a 20-year event; Saturn-Pluto is an approximately 36-year event; Pluto-Eris contacts happen perhaps once per century — and now all three are happening at once. This is a sign of the times — of the intensity and chaos and multidimensional developments that are taking place in society right now.

Yet Jupiter conjunct Saturn is the last of these; it happens in Aquarius — not Capricorn, which is a way of saying it’s taking place in a new reality — and that you are entering a new reality, by way of all you’ve read above (and more). It represents a different process from anything related to Pluto. Aquarius is your house of values and resources, so Jupiter-Saturn is like an investment in your foundation. In my estimation, this represents a point of stabilization after the chaotic events involving Saturn, Pluto and Eris in 2019-2020.

Last night, working on this reading, I consulted the Oracle: a database of my horoscopes that functions as a divination tool. My question was personal, though the response represented a much wider reality. The device, which selects randomly from about 20,000 horoscopes with no key word prompts (it only uses the time), returned the Taurus weekly horoscope from June 25, 1999.

It reads:

“The two hands of God have been described, astrologically, as Saturn (which limits, forms and shapes our reality) and Jupiter, which expands, expresses and enlightens us. These two hands work on a potter’s wheel, shaping our lives; we are the clay pot in creation. Without one hand, or the other, there would be no shape or form to the clay. For the past year, your life has been under the powerful influence of Saturn, pushing you inward. Now, Saturn is about to be joined in Taurus by Jupiter, which is certain to give you a strong gust of strength from within, and the extra power you need to push outward in this truly significant time in your life and growth.”

This interpretation is a description of the most recent Jupiter-Saturn conjunction, which was May 28, 2000, in the sign Taurus. We could say that this is the process you are working toward: conscious self-formation. It is true that the action of Pluto, which will be in your life for the foreseeable future, has been taking a different approach — a more radical one. Yet in this life, honoring Jupiter and Saturn provides boundaries for many other types of change and progress, and makes the deeper and more dangerous kinds of changes safer, because your worldly needs are honored.

You are free to adapt this “two hands of God” approach at any time, remembering that in one sense, you are shaping yourself, and in another, it’s helpful to ask for wisdom and guidance in this process — and particularly to seek help from the Inner Light in your process of self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others.

The thing to remember is that growth implies change. Change implies facing the unknown. This can be a daunting prospect if you are viewing your life through the optics of fear and not your creativity. Happiness and longevity would seem to be acts of adaptation and perseverance, yet only if motivated by your love of existence.

The Need for True Clarity

Let’s end with a discussion of your 3rd house, which covers mental processes and communication. The astrology you’re experiencing emphasizes a need to strive for clarity. Yet don Juan (of the *Teachings of don Juan* series) emphasizes that clarity is one of the enemies of mankind. What he means is false, fixated clarity that obscures other potential viewpoints.

It is possible that you might experience this, though something else seems more likely: living in a fog, struggling for a clue about what you really think. It’s also a caution against bias that you cannot see.

The 3rd house of the archetypal Capricorn chart (also called your solar chart) is Pisces, which is now the home of Neptune and Nessus. Neptune can have the effect of putting a fog over things, or distorting one's perspective. It can also represent denial. Given that this is taking place in your house of mental processes, you must learn how to spot your own biases. Since this is not easy (though it is possible, if you are exceptionally honest, curious and disciplined), you can do it, though in any event I suggest you have help, and that you use tools.

One tool might be documenting your journey, so that you have a sense of your viewpoint as it changes over time. This will help you notice whether there are any contradictions in your point of view, and also see that your thoughts develop.

Given that we're talking about Pisces and the 3rd house, you might use photographs as part of your documentary process, such as taking a photo of your desk every day, and seeing how it changes. This can include a screen shot of your computer desktop.

It will also help to converse with people with whom you disagree, and to do your best to see their point of view. Really push yourself. When you feel yourself arrive at a conclusion, do everything in your power to assess the evidence that got you from one mental step to the next. Was there any evidence? Were you following your hunch or your gut, or were you really thinking? At this stage of your growth, the really thinking thing is essential.

As for Nessus, we could write a whole book, but the thing to watch for is any form of victim consciousness. This is the worst kind of bias — and it is trending now. It may be chic, but it's not about growth. In order to grow and become, in order to claim who you are, and to claim your independence, this is the most important thing to get over.

Then, you can take the steps that you need, to reach solid ground with yourself: to claim your values, your achievements, your needs, your desires and your personal truth; to claim yourself, for you.