

July

2014

A Month of Astrologically Inspired Journaling and Ritual

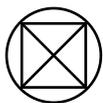
July will be a big pivot point this year. Not only do three planets switch direction — Mercury, Saturn, Uranus — but Jupiter will enter Leo and Mars will finally enter Scorpio after wearing out its welcome and then some in Libra. For those keeping score, Mars was in Libra for seven months. That was seven long months of fighting, breaking up, getting back together again . . . and repeat. Libra is the sign of relationships after all and seeing how the South Node of the Moon is in Aries, we've had our karmic work cut out for us. Have we learned our lesson? Have we learned to work together and find common ground? By the middle of July we'll find out when Mars crosses the degree of April's lunar eclipse. Around the same time Jupiter will enter Leo, the sign of creativity, identity, expression, after a year in Cancer. Come July 25, Mars will be in new territory, too. Big changes will be afoot!

JULY 1: MERCURY DIRECT



After winding its way back through Gemini since June 7, Mercury will station direct. Hooray! But before you go off with abandon, setting in motion all the things you've been holding back on, give Mercury a few days to shake out. Mercury will station direct at 24 degrees Gemini.

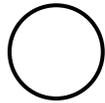
JULY 4-8: CARDINAL GRAND CROSS REDUX



Feeling a touch of déjà vu? That's because we'll have another cardinal grand cross over the first week or so of July. I know, you thought we were done with this all back in April when we had the last cardinal grand cross. Basically, with Uranus and Pluto holding a 90 degree angle, the Sun and Mars will complete the connection to form something called a grand square in the cardinal signs of Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn.

(Check out the glyph above for a better idea of what this would look like.) This is one of the most stressful aspects in astrology and those who made it through April can attest that it is no joke. It is confrontational energy that may feel like we're in an energetic hurricane for a few days. Batten down the hatches! The Sun will oppose Pluto on July 4 and square Uranus on July 8.

JULY 12: FULL MOON IN CAPRICORN



Falling in the sign of Capricorn, this full moon will spotlight career, ambition, status, and long term commitment. Capricorn is the sign that gets us to look beyond the horizon and pragmatically build for the future, brick by brick. And so with the Capricorn Full Moon, we may not only see an long tended aspiration come to a resolution, but the fruit of our labors as well. There may be the potential for upsets and sudden developments with this full moon — Mars, Uranus, and the lunar nodes form a square to the full moon degree — but a helpful sextile from Saturn in Scorpio will encourage us to keep working even as the ground shifts beneath your feet. The full moon will be exact at 7:25 am EDT, 20 degrees Capricorn/Cancer.

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Bevin's Activity — Goals Are Dreams with Deadlines: As a Capricorn I'm a big thinker. It's helpful for me to think of my goals as dreams with deadlines. It's also very helpful for me when I'm in the midst of a big project to take an inventory of where I am in terms of where I'd eventually like to be. A great tool I use is keeping a goal book — where you break down into the tiniest pieces every step along the way to a big goal. Sometimes for me I can only map out so far and then I have to leave an ellipses (“..”) for the Universe to fill in. However, sometimes I need to take a look back so I don't get so frustrated with how slowly my progress may be going. (“Slow” is always a matter of perspective, as I often struggle with accepting the Universe's timetable over my own.)

Since this Full Moon in Capricorn is about seeing aspirations completed and the fruits of our labor, and sometimes it can be really hard to see the forest for the trees when you're not “there” yet, take the opportunity to inventory. Imagine a couple of your bigger goals and break down the goal into the tiniest steps from the very beginning of working on it. If it's a book, where did you start your brainstorming, how many days have you spent in coffee shops, how many drafts have you read? Take a few minutes and really allow yourself to revel in all of the steps you've taken and how much you've done.

JULY 13: MERCURY IN CANCER



Mercury in Cancer will be another wave of familiar feelings. That's because Mercury spent the first couple of weeks in Cancer before turning retrograde on June 7. Now back in Cancer, we're almost out of the retrograde shadow — meaning Mercury has to get to 2 degrees Cancer before its out of the terrain it covered during its retrograde.

Additionally, when Mercury is in Cancer, our communication process is emotionally based versus logic based.

JULY 16: JUPITER IN LEO

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Jupiter, the planet of growth and exploration, will enter Leo for a year long residency! Wherever Jupiter is, we will have luck on our side and Leo will not be a shabby place to enjoy its bounty. Think joy, creativity, children, the arts, play, and anything regal. If you are a Leo, you will have a powerful force of protection in your corner into 2015.

JULY 16: MARS ON THE ECLIPSE DEGREES

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In astrology, Mars is considered a trigger for events. By the middle of the month, Mars will have reached the degrees of the October 18, 2013 and April 15, 2014 lunar eclipse degrees, setting in motion something that was seeded around these two dates — not that you need to worry or anything. Just keep an eagle eye alert in case something bubbles up. Does it feel like the hand of fate?

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Bevin's Activity — Checking the Calendar: Whenever Katie mentions a call-back to dates, I like to check my journals, morning pages and calendar to see what was up for me during those astrological events and keep my eyes and soul peeled for the new lessons coming up from the Universe. One of the best parts about struggle is being out of the struggle and looking back to see how we're doing. I like feeling if I'm walking through fire I celebrate coming out the other end. So check your archives for October 18, 2013 and April 15, 2014. What happened? Stay open to seeing the reminders of how far you've come and make notes of the parallels. Are you able to approach things differently this time around?

JULY 18: VENUS IN CANCER

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After almost four weeks in Gemini, Venus nestles into Cancer for a home cooked meal and the comforts of family. If Venus is a planet associated with value, then over the next few weeks we will take pleasure all things home, family, comfort as well as emotional connections. We will also be attracted to people and situations that provide stability and security.

JULY 21: URANUS RETROGRADE

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Fresh on the heels of Saturn's shift in direction, Uranus will settle in for a retrograde at 16 degrees Aries, retracing its steps over the next five months. The station, which is to say when it holds its position,

will saturate the collective with Uranian themes of genius, technology, and inspiration. Keep an eye out for sudden realizations like bolts from the blue or cosmic downloads. Uranus is all about authenticity and breaking free of calcified restraints.

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Bevin's Activity — Dare to Share One of the things I focus most in my coaching practice is authenticity. You are never really free until you can feel like yourself. There are so many blocks to living our authenticity — family and social expectations, media brainwashing, feeling tied down due to money. We can spend an entire lifetime rooting out who we really are underneath all the drag we have to wear (both literally and figuratively).

As Uranus stations retrograde, dare to share yourself — some very true, very deep part of yourself. This sharing could be with a trusted friend or could just be to yourself in a new way. This sharing could be a long journal entry, a written note, a deep conversation or a new outfit that feels entirely “you.” It will probably feel scary at first, which is how you know you’re growing. And it might feel uncomfortable, but that will pass. The way you’ll know it’s authenticity showing up is that you feel yourself in a new way.

Living authentically takes practice, but it’s also wildly worth it. I find the more I live my life authentically the more mental space I have not worrying about what people think of me.

JULY 22: SUN IN LEO



Happy birthday, Leo! When the Sun is in the sign of the lion, it’s all about creativity, romance, and drama. Couple this with the annual conjunction of the Sun and Jupiter on July 24, and we will be living large! Leo is the sign that reminds us to be a kid at heart and to make time for art, play, and joy.

JULY 24: SUN CONJUNCT JUPITER



Mark this day because the Sun’s annual link up with Jupiter, newly arrived in Leo, has all the makings for joy, creativity, play, drama, and creative expression. Perfect for artists, actors, and risk takers.

JULY 25: MARS IN SCORPIO



Aries and Scorpio rejoice! It’s been a long slog, but after seven months and a retrograde, Mars will finally enter Scorpio like a breath of (intensely) fresh air. Mars will be quite at home in Scorpio seeing how its a sign that it rules and during this time our collective actions will center on all things Scorpio — psychology, the shadow self, themes of life and death, purge, sexuality, power, and finance. Just what you were waiting for, right? Mars will be in Scorpio until September 13.

JULY 26: NEW MOON IN LEO



Leo New Moon's are already pretty sweet, starting us on a month long chapter of romance, creativity, play, and fun. But this one will be extra special because the new moon will join up with Jupiter. Let the games begin! While the new moon will make a dynamic and provocative square to Mars in Scorpio, this will be the perfect time for festivities and celebration. Leo loves a good party! The new moon will be exact at 6:42 pm EDT, 3 degrees Leo.

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Bevin's Activity — Play Matters: There are so many studies that show how play, activities that have no outcomes other than just having fun, is essential to health, reduced stress and actually helps work productivity over the long run. I also believe that play is a really great method for staying connected with Spirit. With this New Moon in Leo energy, take some time to brainstorm how you'd like to "play" this month and actually do it. If you're stuck for ideas, think back to the activities you enjoyed as a kid. Was it Super Mario on the GameBoy? Was it collaging? Was it sculpting with clay? Make a list of how you want to play and set an intention to do it on or around the New Moon in Leo.

Activity duration: Three days before or after the new moon.

JULY 31: MERCURY IN LEO



Leaving behind the sensitive shores of Cancer, Mercury will trek into Leo for a short trip. During this time our communication will get a lot more dramatic! Perfect for writers, dramatists, artists, and speakers. Mercury will be in Leo until August 15.

BEVIN BRANLANDINGHAM is an ultra rad warrior for self-acceptance. She is a writer, performer, and cultural producer in Brooklyn, New York, who believes that all bodies are good bodies and works to make the world safe for people to love themselves. She blogs at queerfatfemme.com and offers body liberation and one-on-one authenticity coaching via phone and Skype. KATIE SWEETMAN is an intuitive and karmic astrologer based in Brooklyn, New York, who uses the natal chart as a tool for deep healing. She is available for one-on-one astrology consultations via phone, Skype, or in person. You can find her online at empoweringastrology.com.