

INTERPRETING SIGNS AND EVENTS

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A number of you want to know how to best pick up on these inner events, astrological and otherwise. When I write about New and Full Moons, solstices, and what they mean, I tend to leave out one fact, and that is our awareness of what is going on and how easily we slip back into our everyday distractions, ignoring what's most important, and generally trip-out, carried away in the moment. What about that?

The mind is, as the Tibetans like to call it, the "Wish-fulfilling Gem," and that phrase is worth thinking through, for the mind is like a perfect diamond. It is by nature crystal clear. Of course, my mind is not often so clear because I tend to obscure it in endless ways. My point is that when I write out an astrological interpretation here, how useful it might be to you (except at the time when you to read it) depends on your ability to retain any clarity you might get from my words. Or is it in one ear and out the other?

Let me count the ways we cloud our minds. Don't paint me as the Old Maid here or the teetotaler curmudgeon over in the corner, either. When I drink a cup of coffee, the caffeine in the coffee creates a white-noise buzz that drowns out any of the more subtler intuitions that might be trying to percolate up from within me. I found out this out many years ago. As a writer, I (very gradually mind you) noticed that the mornings I drank a big cup of java, my intuition just dried up. Gone.

Sure, I wrote a lot of words on coffee; I wrote like crazy, but when I read it back to myself, the deeper more intuitive stuff that I wanted to see come out just wasn't there. It never made it to the surface because of the airplane whine of the caffeine singing in my head. I finally realized that by cutting out (or back) the caffeine, my writing improved. In the long run, my writing was more important to me than that wonderful coffee buzz and I just dropped it. Haven't had coffee in many, many years and I never felt the loss. I chose not to drink it.

And it did not happen overnight, but by years of trial and error. I would drink some coffee and the writing was blah. I would not drink coffee and it was better or even good, etc. Finally the daily experience of just my own mind without the speed and buzz of coffee actually felt better than having coffee, so I just stopped drinking coffee.

It was the same way for me with alcohol. Being a musician back in the day, I played in a lot of bars.... and I mean a lot of bars. And we drank a lot of you-name-it. The bitter-clear Pilsners like Beck's beer were my favorite. Over time, however, I had the same experience as I did with coffee: I missed the clarity of my own mind as it began to cloud up when I drank. And when I drank less, my mind was of course less cloudy, and when I didn't drink at all, my mind was just clear and bright. There was a message there, but it took me years to grasp it.

God knows I tried it hundreds of times, drinking=cloudy mind, not drinking=clear mind. In the end I just stopped drinking because I really like to be clearly there, fully present. As my daughter Michael Anne wrote (I have two daughters that are singer/songwriters) in one of her songs: "I want to be there when I die." Me too. I have not had a drop to drink since I don't remember when, but it was many, many years ago. And again, I chose it. It was not a deprivation. I felt better when I didn't drink.

I could go on, but you get the idea. You have all heard the old phrase “You can’t salt the salt.” In the same vein, you can’t improve the mind by altering it in any way. Yes, you can train it to be more aware, but not with substances. At best, substances can perhaps allow you to see how the mind works, but after seeing what is to be seen the mind likes to be left in its natural state. What’s my point?

My point is that we can’t expect to be sensitive to what our intuition is telling us, like the subtle information that is released at the New Moon, etc. unless we remove at least enough of our obscurations to see clearly. We can ignore our intuition, bathe in distractions, and obscure our mental clarity all we want and also expect to tune in to our inner sensibilities. No one is forcing us to have a clear mind, obviously. Look around you. I found that out for myself. We each have to go through that door ourselves and willingly. No one is ever going to force us to be clear. That is a choice only we can make.

In the long run I find it way more interesting and satisfying to share in the creative force around and within me than I ever did by ignoring the obvious or clouding up my mind with everything I could get my hands on. But that may just be me.

If any of you want to read in detail about my own struggles with substances, I wrote it out. I warn you though, it is personal and full of my own stories on this subject.

“The Loss of Substance: Stories and Notes on Addiction”

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