

## HAPPENING NOW: RITES OF PASSAGE

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It is clear from private messages and emails that more than a few of you are having difficulty with this particular time period, blame it on the Full Moon, the eclipse, the Mars-Pluto conjunction, or whatever. Let's put the reason why this is happening aside for the moment, because whatever we can agree is (or is not) the indicator (the significator), we still have to cope with the present moment, and for some of you I understand it has been a little rough.

Most of my Facebook friends are older, as am I, but believe it or not, I am in touch with a number of you who are roughly thirty-ish and having your own bit of trouble sorting this out, so this blog is for you "thirty-somethings," although those of us older are not exempt from this event.

There are at least several pivotal climactic events in each life, call them rites-of-passage or whatever you wish. They are times not only of increased change, but what we could call polar-change, a complete flip from what went before. The unfortunate thing is that society does not openly refer to this transition, much less prepare us for it. Yet it happens to each and every one of us like clockwork around the age of thirty, actually 29.4 years, which is our Saturn return in the solar system.

Now I have (you know me) written an entire book about this transition called "Astrology of the Heart: Astro-Shamanism," and although the book is perhaps too personal for some, nevertheless it documents my own story in great detail. You can buy it in paperback on Amazon.com or find it free, along with my other e-books, here:

<http://astrologysoftware.com/books/index.asp?orig>

That book covers a lot of ground, which I can't begin to go over in a blog or even a short series of them, but I do want to zero-in on one point that I feel that many of you younger folks are missing, and that is how we do things (like live our life) before and after the age of thirty. I don't have to remind you of the old chestnut "Never trust anyone over thirty," do I? I guess I just did, but it is not only intriguing, it is straight-out true. The inner transformation at the climacteric age of thirty is, in my opinion, the most profound (and esoteric) change life offers. It goes unmentioned, undocumented, and (worst of all) un-celebrated.

When we start to wake up after thirty, many of us are so very much alone and on our own. There is no welcoming committee to realization, at least in this society. When I was about that age I wrote the following wry comment about my own transition:

Ah!

Who could let such a bargain pass,  
As this poor century will allow.  
On coming in, I'm asked to leave,  
And when asked to leave,  
I bow.

It is no wonder my first dharma teacher was obsessed with palindromes, sentences that read the same forward as backward, such as the classic example: "Able was I ere I saw Elba." It is not just a word game, but a deep truth that life reads the same forward as backward, and the mirror we see ourselves in (our doppelganger or perfect reflection) is nothing less than our thirtieth year. It would seem that everything leads up to that year, call it our "prime," and away from that year, forward and backward.

Synonymous with that reflection is the resolution of what the poet Auden (and others) call the "terrible crystal," the whole concept of the personality and its demise as life winds its way down to an eventual death. We won't go there just now, but it is a cloud on the horizon of many. I am getting off track here because there is so much unknown on this topic that deserves knowing. The point of this blog is very simple.

Before the age of thirty, all we know is to push forward into the future, to look up at our elders, wish to be where they are, and wait for our majority, our maturity as an adult. Of course, all that ends at thirty, when Saturn returns and time (as we know it) stops, but that too is another metaphor. Simply put, after thirty years of age we no longer physically grow, and we are forced to (or naturally) begin the reflection, the elaborate deconstruction of whatever we have become up to that point. We begin to mirror.

And most of us "do not go gentle into that good night," as Dylan Thomas put it, but rather we "Rage, rage against the dying of the light," or what we believe is dying. All of this is a grand dance reflected in the mirror of time and deconstruction inexorably begins at around the age of thirty, although we can live on for decades without any awareness of what took place. It takes place, nevertheless, just like the fact of our prime takes place, with or without awareness or celebration of that fact.

The heart of my point here is that whereas when we are under thirty years of age we accomplish things through will, effort, and pushing forward, after thirty years of age, this won't work. In fact we can seriously injure ourselves (inside) by continuing to push beyond the limit of time, which is thirty years. And we do so at our own risk.

At around thirty years we must begin to give up being born, pushing (like an infant) to get out, and begin to let off at effort, and learn to allow life to deliver to us what is ours. It is the difference (in the martial arts) between Judo and Aikido, one is offensive and the second defensive. Judo is all push, Aikido all take. You really must understand the difference.

When we are over thirty, we can no longer push anything out. We are, ready-or-not, as "out" as

we will be and, instead, we must flip our attitude, and learn to progress not by effort or force of will, but rather by working-with life, letting-go, and accommodating (receiving) what comes or is coming to us. This is such a profound and total change that I am surprised it is not even noticed (and certainly not celebrated) in these modern times.

And the danger here, which is why I write this, is that those of you just over thirty (or whatever age) assume that the way you get things done will continue to be the way you always got things done, by “your” effort and will. However, that is no longer possible or true. You will fail at that if you try. It will drive you crazy. Instead, very, very gradually, you will find that the only way to progress now (and into the future) is to accommodate and work with situations in a more-or-less passive way compared to your youth. This is called developing the ability to respond, commonly known as “responsibility,” and we each will come to it sooner or later because there is no back-door to life, no other exit. Responsibility is mandatory.

I see so many of you in confusion about this, blaming this or that part of your past (or present) for what, instead, is a very natural change. You are just changing. There is no blame or reason other than that I have explained, that your time is up (time ends at thirty), your prime was reached, and you are going into receivership, and must now learn to take just as you once learned to give. It takes years.

This post is getting long, so I may have to finish this tomorrow. However, although I am sure I have not adequately communicated here, hopefully you get the idea, which is: the mirror of life reflects at thirty years of age and it starts out when we begin to see our own reflection and first realize there is, in fact, a mirror, and we are now but a reflection of what before was being reflected. We are now seeing, just as we were previously seen. A mystery? Of course. Life is a palindrome; it reads the same forward as backward. That is my point, but we each have to realize it not as an idea, but in real-time. Understand?