

Everyday Spirituality

by Colleen Foye Bollen



The Big Jump

The searing pain came as shock. One minute I was working at my computer and the next, stabbing bolts of electricity were shooting down my right leg.

In hindsight, I could see the problem had been building, dropping hints with sharp bursts of pain that left as quickly as they came. The occurrences were easy to ignore until the final, infinitesimal shift from health

to immobility.

Flash forward a few weeks, and the pain had a label: a bulging disc in my lower back. A spinal disc, smaller than a marble, had commandeered my life. In an instant all my to-do lists, deadlines, and plans were pushed to the bottom of my priority list. My new goal boiled down to one word, mobility. Constant gnawing pain severely limited my movements,

What Is Governing Us In 2008?

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habit? Spend more time with family? These are all worthy goals. But with this year's planetary pileup, we can do even better.

In a recent interview by Dena DeCastro, evolutionary astrologer Steven Forrest spoke of Pluto's entry into Capricorn as a call to ask ourselves what is governing us? This question is at the heart of the transition into 2008 for all of us. What is really running our lives? We are being asked to look at what our real priorities are, not what we want to believe they are or what we want others to believe they are. We are being asked to get real.

On a larger scale, Capricorn represents institutions, corporations, and government. While Pluto is in Capricorn for the next several years, we'll certainly see more of the dark side of these organizations as Pluto works to cleanse and rework them into entities that are more integrable. But on a personal level, we too have to think about what is in charge of our life. Is it us, our spirit, our higher self? Or have we succumbed to a structure and a set of game rules that once served us, but have now become corrupt or outdated, preventing our growth instead of facilitating it? Have our actions and achievements reflected our true desires or have we simply put on a show to impress and gain the esteem of others?

In the traditional tarot, there is a card known as The Tower. The card depicts a tower that has been struck

by lightning, and is being destroyed. The tower fell because it was flawed; it was built on a foundation that is lacking, and falls because it can no longer stand without the proper support when lightning tests its strength. This year, Pluto will ask us to see what the foundation of our lives is really built on, so that we can let go of our attachment to what we no longer need. This can be a difficult process, because it is messy and sometimes embarrassing to change direction, but if we allow the problem to go on too long, we are no longer living with integrity.

Most of us don't enjoy taking a seemingly well-organized routine and throwing it up in the air. But it is time to rebuild, to create new traditions, and we can do it with integrity, practicality, and a new vision in 2008.

The Sun, Mercury, Venus, and Jupiter can all help this process, as well as January's new moon. The Sun reminds us that we are strong, vibrant beings who can survive and thrive in this process of renewal. Mercury encourages us to give voice to what we see needs to change, to not be afraid to say it out loud, even if only to ourselves. Venus encourages us to let go of the old with grace, and Jupiter is the springboard into the new hope and vision, all the potential that is now uncovered as we go forward, with lives and hearts scrubbed clean.

The Capricorn new moon on January 8th is a great time to begin the process. A new moon, especially in Capricorn, is a time for quiet contemplation and of incu-

bation. The only light during a new moon is the light within, as the world around us is darkened. Take this opportunity to make room in your busy life to retreat into quiet for a few moments and think about where your life has fallen into simple robotic behavior, where you might be doing what you've always done just because that's the way it's always been. Have you lost touch with whether or not these actions make you happy or are a true reflection of your spirit?

Let go of what it could be or what almost was or what you originally intended, and simply bring up the courage to just see it as it is, without judgment or shame. Before we act in the world and in our lives, it is best to know what action we want to take, and why.

It is after this courageous process that you will know what seed to plant and what resolutions to set, to create a structure in your life that will actually support you. Then you can take 2008 to begin to make it real. Capricorn wants to see results, to go from plan to execution.

To aid in your meditation, take a look at your horoscope to see where in your life Pluto is encouraging you to rebuild.

Carl Jung said, "I'd rather be whole than good." Amy uses astrology to help people become whole. She has been studying, teaching, and reading for clients as a counseling astrologer and intuitive for over a decade. See her website www.heavenlytruth.com.

reducing me to hobbling across the room and butt-bumping down stairs. Only the ability to hold a book and read saved my sanity.

One afternoon, while searching for yet another book to divert my attention, I came across my favorite childhood story, *The Big Jump* by Benjamin Elkin. Taking the slim copy off the living room bookshelf, I reread it.

The story takes place long ago in a far away kingdom where only kings are allowed to own dogs. When a young boy named Ben falls in love with one of the King's puppies, he sadly exclaims, "I wish I could be a king."

Reading about Ben's plight, I thought, who hasn't yearned for a treasure or talent someone else possesses? From my housebound perspective, I envied people who could walk and drive.

Upon hearing the young boy's wish, the King told Ben that kings must be able to do many things other people could not, including the Big Jump. Before Ben could ask what that was, the King jumped to the top of his castle in one leap. Standing high above his land, the King looked down on Ben and the puppy and proclaimed, "If you jump up here, I can't make you a king, but I can let you keep the puppy."

Ah, the carrot-on-a-stick trick. Tell someone they can have the object of their desire, if they fulfill a seemingly impossible task. We all know that ploy. From eating the dreaded canned peas to get dessert to daily runs in hopes of winning a marathon, a strong desire can motivate a person to pursue a difficult goal.

And so it was with Ben. He really wanted that puppy and quickly accepted the challenge.

The King allowed Ben to keep the puppy while he tried to accomplish the seemingly impossible quest. With the puppy looking on, Ben practiced jumping onto stacks of boxes. Sadly, he was a terrible jumper. With every jump, no matter how high or short, he fell to the ground.

Thinking about Ben's plight, I felt a kinship with him. Every time I recalled a doctor telling

me that putting a bulging disc back in place was like putting toothpaste back in a tube, I felt despair. To resume my normal life without undergoing surgery, I would have to take on a challenge as daunting as Ben's, healing my bluging disc.

As Ben's story continued, he was about to give up when the puppy jumped on one box, then the next and then the next, until he reached the top of the stack. "Ha, ha," said Ben. "Now I know how to jump."

The next morning Ben raced to the castle followed by a group of children. He called out to the King, "I can do it, I can do it." Then with a smile on his face, Ben jumped up to the top of the castle one step at a time.

The other children laughed and said, "Anyone can jump that way."

"Yes," said the King, handing the dog to Ben. "Anyone can jump this way, but it took Ben to show you it was possible."

How often do we act like those laughing children, thinking there is only one way to succeed? If we are lucky, we have someone like Ben who shows us a way to break our goal down into smaller steps.

Following the wise example Ben set before me, I stopped yearning for a miracle and took baby steps toward recovery. Although it took longer than I wanted and required the assistance of healing arts practitioners and daily Jin Shin Jyutsu self-help treatments, I did it. I am not jumping to the top of a castle in one big jump, but I am walking, one step at a time.

Colleen Foye Bollen is a healing arts practitioner offering personalized Jin Shin Jyutsu, reiki and sound healing treatments at her healing arts studio, in hospitals and through distant healing. For appointments call (206) 367-0491 or visit her website at www.flowlingstillness.com. Colleen will present a hands-on workshop, "Acupressure: The Power to Heal is in Your Hands," at Seattle's East West Bookshop, at 7 p.m. on January 28.

On The Bookshelf

Reviewed by Krysta Gibson

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watch this video.

On the video you will see groups of men in India who show up for work in a factory, change into their work clothes, and then proceed to laugh together before going to work. You will see crowds of men, women, and children gathering in parks in India where they laugh together while puzzled onlookers watch. You will see children in a classroom learn how to laugh again.

The founder of the Laughter Clubs is interviewed and he explains how he came to see the benefits of laughter as being a form of yoga. Some of the people on the video credit laughter with helping them heal from cancer. Others have used it to heal the grief of a broken heart.

Laughter is amazing medicine. Even if you can't get to a group and experiencing

this for yourself, get a copy of the DVD. You will be laughing almost from the beginning of the video. Laughter is contagious. I plan to watch my video many more times. It was that much fun.

You Can Heal Your Life Movie and Affirmations DVD Hay House

I predict this movie will outsell *The Secret* and here is why. Not only does the movie follow the transformation of a fictional woman character, but it also has true-life stories told by famous authors such as Louise Hay, Wayne Dyer, Doreen Virtue, and others. There's nothing like hearing someone else's story to prompt you to say, "If she can do it, so can I!"

The main story, of course, is that of Louise Hay who turns 81 this year. Her publishing house celebrated 20

years in business in 2007. That means she was 61 when she started this most visible form of service. That should motivate some 40 and 50-year-olds who feel they have missed the boat.

Louise tells the story of how she started with her small meeting groups and publishing one book, to hosting seminars with thousands of people and books published in many different countries. She faced plenty of challenges, including a bout with cancer, and had to use her own techniques to prove that what she was teaching actually works!

The video offers a lot of support for making changes, for being more positive, and for moving ahead no matter the challenges one is facing. The quality of the movie is outstanding and one can't help but feel uplifted watching it. As I said, I predict it will outsell *The Secret*. Better grab your copy now.