

SATURN INTO LIBRA

Time to Tie the Knot

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Every 2-3 years Saturn, the furthest planet visible to the naked eye, changes from one zodiac sign to the next. Saturn acts as a kind of social barometer telling us what political and moral values and beliefs will hold sway during that time period. Life is constantly in a state of flux and there is no such thing as a perfect world, even though many politicians and utopians try hard to create one. Saturn is a planet of reality rather than idealism. Its function is to help us grow and develop through commitment and discipline and to understand the karmic lesson that we reap what we sow.

On October 30th Saturn moves on from two years spent in Virgo, heading into cardinal air sign Libra where it will stay until October 2012. Saturn in sensible, practical earth sign Virgo has been our constant companion throughout the global financial crisis, reminding us that greed is not necessarily good and moderation can be sexy. The environment has also been a major topic of debate. Now Libra has many of the same values as Virgo. Both are cooperative in nature, neither are flashy or showy and while Virgo concerns itself with service, health and getting things right, Libra focuses on diplomacy, balance, harmony and relationships. Saturn is said to be 'exalted' in Libra, meaning its benefits and gifts are potentially great. So what can we expect over the next three years?

Well firstly, more people getting married and staying together longer. Libra's ruling planet is Venus and Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that Australia is currently experiencing a marriage "renaissance" with divorce rates dropping at a greater rate than at any time over the past 20 years (6% at the last count). Cynics would say the financial crisis has made divorce too expensive, but in times of trouble, people always stick together and that's not a bad thing. And more long term relationships usually lead to more children and more stable families and communities.

So if commitment is on the menu, we can also apply this theme to other types of relationships, such as government and business partnerships and client-practitioner relationships. Whereas in the past it's been fashionable to chop and change, my prediction is that people will focus more on job security, building better relationships with clients, employees and business colleagues and taking a long term view of all partnerships and alliances. Astrologer Thomas Zimmer writes: "No calamity could

overwhelm a society's resilience and community spirit if that society were well and sincerely governed. The fears we all have about running out of water, food and energy are really fears that when those shortages occur we will not be well governed, that fairness will not prevail and that community spirit could break down."

Another popular theme will be work-life balance. Most of us work too hard and complain about being over-committed and lacking in quality time for self, friends and family. Saturn in Libra encourages us to lead a more balanced, moderate lifestyle creating relationships based on integrity and worth, rather than money, beauty or other more shallow considerations. This should translate into new fashions and trends reflecting a desire for quality over quantity and substance over hype.

Clever marketers are taking advantage of these new trends. You may have seen the TV ad for UBank's high interest account USaver with the slogan 'Saving is the new spending'. Tapping into the feeling that savings is becoming more fashionable than spending in the current climate and that excess is a thing of the past, the campaign aims to promote the virtues of people who save versus those who live above their means. The commercial highlights moments of excessive consumption, such as a Ferrari driver who still lives with his mum or a flashy business man paying for his colleagues' drinks when his credit card is nearly maxed out. Noah Regan, Creative Director of the agency behind the ad says: "Our goal with the 'Saving is the new spending' campaign is to get people excited about savings. Living unreasonably beyond your means is so 2007."

Well back in 2007 Jupiter and Pluto were both in fiery Sagittarius, the sign of excess and the stock market was booming and consumption and confidence at an all time high. Pluto is now in sober Capricorn, meaning that when Saturn enters Libra it will form a challenging angle (a square) to Pluto. This represents a major reality check with solid relationships holding the key to wellbeing and progress.