

AstroUpdate – April 2010

*Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do.
So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails.
Explore! Dream! Discover! (Mark Twain)*

Happy Easter and welcome to the Stella Starwoman April AstroUpdate!

This month our featured sign is Aries, so happy birthday to all you Rams. We have an article by yoga teacher Claire Heywood on preparing for autumn plus some interesting info on the real origins of Easter. And just read on to find out how you can receive a complimentary copy of my soon to be released Zodiac Affirmations Screensaver.

Zodiac Affirmations Screensaver- Free Gift

I'd like to thank all of you who attended my February workshop series on tarot, astrology and relationships. I hope to hold more workshops in the future but would really appreciate some feedback from you, so I know exactly what you want and don't want..... And as everyone is so busy these days, I'm giving you an incentive to help me out.

Any AstroUpdate subscriber who completes and submits the following short questionnaire before the end of April will **receive a complimentary copy** of my brand new Zodiac Affirmations Screensaver software for PC.

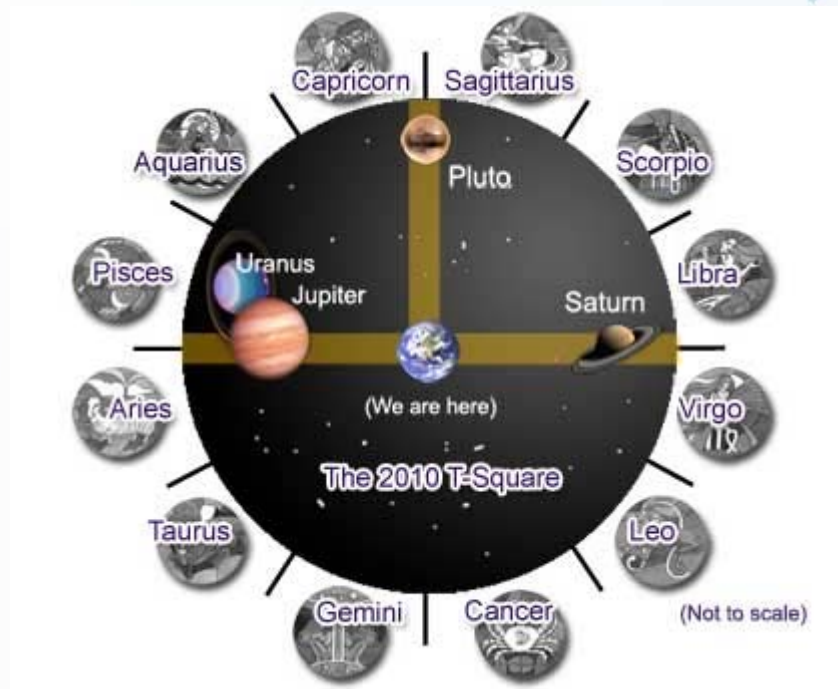
With weekly affirmations for your star sign set against a beautiful series of animated backgrounds by Australian designer Cristina Re, not only will these affirmations brighten up your day, but you'll learn heaps about astrology and yourself at the same time.



[Click here](#) to go to the questionnaire ... and thank you in advance for your assistance! Once all the results are in at the end of April, I'll send you your Zodiac Screensaver.



Saturn-Uranus-Pluto Cardinal 7 Square



I came across this beautiful diagram of the 2010 Saturn – Uranus – Pluto T-Square, mentioned in previous newsletters. T-Squares occur when two planets oppose each other in the heavens (Saturn and Uranus) and a third planet sits at the midpoint (Pluto). Think of a tug of war between three strong and opposing forces. That's what's happening in the world this year and maybe in your world too!

Saturn - tradition, hard work, structure, boundaries, rules, laws, government & practical application

Uranus – innovation, new ideas and energy, paradigm shifts, brilliance, technology, invention

Pluto - death of the old, birth of the new, ruthless power, destruction, transformation

Our challenge is to get these three planets working together in a cooperative manner, pooling their energies rather than having them destroy or compete with each other. This is true in own lives and also on a collective level. “Think globally, act locally’ is the best advice. Every small action and thought counts, and rather than putting our heads in the sand and hoping crises or problems will go away, we must do whatever we can to make positive, creative and innovative changes in our own world while respecting the rights of others.

The ripple effect of independent thought and loving action creates strong communities made up of strong individuals. No dictator or terrorist can hold sway when people refuse to give in to collective fear.



Preparing for Autumn

I'd like to introduce you to AstroUpdate subscriber Claire Heywood who has her own yoga studio, Sun Yoga at 21a Sun Crescent in Sunshine. Claire is a yoga teacher, certified shiatsu practitioner and graduate of Melbourne's College of the Arts Dance School, so if you're living out in Melbourne's wild west and are into yoga or want a relaxing treatment – visit www.sunyoga.com.au where you can also sign up for Claire's free newsletter and read about her upcoming rainforest retreat in tropical Queensland. Claire and I are celebrating 20 years of friendship this year. To mark the occasion, I'm featuring one of her articles on preparing for autumn and living in tune with the seasons. Thank you Claire for being such a wonderful friend and so much fun to be with!

“Welcome to autumn. My all time favourite season in Melbourne. Cool nights, the bliss of waking up feeling snug under the doona, glorious golden light, clear blue skies and stable weather patterns. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) takes the view that external changes of season are also reflected internally. If you can adjust your daily habits to reflect the seasonal changes then you are more likely to be of good health and less vulnerable to illness. The path of the yogi also asks you to notice what is around you, how you are feeling and how you react to what you observe... to live in harmony with your internal nature and the energy of the planet that supports you.

One of the simplest ways to move with seasonal changes is to adjust your sleeping habits to follow the sun. As the days shorten do less in the evenings and go to bed earlier, get more sleep, and if you can manage it rise with the sun. Start to reduce cooling summer foods such as raw salads and move towards slow cooked warming foods like soups, stews and roasts. Eat what is fresh, good and cheap in the shops and markets. If you eat seasonal foods then you can choose to eat local produce, supporting local farmers and helping to reduce food miles. Good for you, your local community and the health of our planet. As the weather cools down keep warm. It's very easy at this time of the year to be caught off guard and get a chill. So, as my husband says, (with a NYC Jewish accent), “Don't be a big shot, take a jacket!”

But, it's not quite time to put your feet up and retire to the couch. The earth is still warm and there is plenty of growth in the air. In TCM autumn rules your lungs, so it's the perfect time, (and delicious weather), to get out and get your lungs working. Autumn is generally a very busy time, the year has only just moved into full swing and it's all systems go. We are busy getting on with our projects and plans for 2010.

After we pass the equinox, (equal light and dark, March 21 - 22), yin energy grows stronger; we shift from warmth to cold, outwards to inner, light to dark. As the darkness approaches so does the time for reflection, adjustment and gradually slowing down. Over the next 3 months in class we will shift slightly away from stronger, faster yang posture work and incorporate some more yin practices such as breath work, meditation and steady asana practice that draws our focus inwards.

Maybe a sense of sadness accompanies the decline of summer? This grieving is a natural part of the ever turning cycle of life. Birth, growth, fullness, waning, death, and rebirth. The life cycle that is reflected in all of nature. From the life of a star, the life of one day, the life of one person, right down to the life of each single breath. Embrace the waning energy. Move forward with positive energy and excitement for what the cooler seasons will bring. Breathe, observe and find some quiet moments to sit and contemplate the wonders within and without...” www.sunyoga.com.au tel 03 9311 7801



Origins of Easter

The Catholic Encyclopaedia tells us that Easter is named after an Anglo-Saxon goddess, Eostre, goddess of the dawn, but in fact the real origins of Easter and its story of death and resurrection date back much further.

In 3000 BCE, Inanna the Sumerian goddess was worshipped throughout the Mesopotamian world (modern day Iraq) as the main deity. The Akkadians called her Ishtar, the word from which Easter is derived. Inanna-Ishtar's closest western equivalents are the Greek and Roman goddesses, Aphrodite and Venus. Inanna-Ishtar was worshipped as the Queen of Heaven and her principal symbols were the Moon and Venus, the morning and evening star. Eight was the number sacred to Venus, being the number of years it took the planet to return to the exact same point in the zodiac on the exact same date and the goddess was often depicted as an eight pointed star.

One of the most important myths about Inanna-Ishtar is the story of 'Inanna's Descent to the Underworld'. The goddess decided to visit her dark sister Ereshkigal as Erishkigal's husband had died and Inanna wanted to pay her respects. After dressing up in her jewellery and fine clothing, Inanna began her descent to the underworld and at each of the seven gates was met by a servant of Ereshkigal who removed one of her garments. When Inanna finally arrived she was completely naked and powerless. Erishkigal was furious that Inanna had visited uninvited and ordered that she be killed and her body hung on a peg to rot. After three days Inanna's servant became worried by her absence and fashioned little creatures who descended unseen to the underworld with materials to breathe life back into the goddess. They resurrected her and she reascended to her place in heaven.

There are many variations on this myth, but its importance lies in the theme of death and rebirth. At the time of the dark moon, the moon (Inanna) disappears from sight for three days as she conjuncts the sun and is then revealed again. Similarly, the planet Venus (Inanna) disappears from sight when moving from being the Morning Star (rising before the Sun) to the Evening Star (setting after the Sun). On a physical level Inanna's rebirth heralds the coming of spring (these myths are set in the northern hemisphere where Easter is a spring festival). On a psychological level, Inanna's descent to meet her dark sister Ereshkigal represents the encounter with our shadow side or unconscious. When we return to the light after a period of darkness, we have the opportunity to become whole. This same theme is reflected in the tarot card of the Hanged Man who voluntarily hangs upside down in an act of sacrifice as a prelude to death and transformation.

Note the similarities between the Inanna-Ishtar myth and the story of Jesus. As Ishtar descended, she was stripped and humiliated; Jesus was stripped and beaten when captured. Ishtar was killed and hung on a stake; Jesus was hung on a cross. Ishtar was resurrected after three days; Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. Both achieved eternal life.

Festivals such as Easter and Christmas have for many of us lost their original meaning and simply become holidays or times of conspicuous consumption. We do not realise that in celebrating Easter, we are participating in an age-old ritual celebrating the return of the light after a period of darkness and death. In Australia we should really celebrate Easter in springtime, but old traditions die hard!



Featured Sign - Aries

From the 21st March to the 20th April, the Sun travels through masculine fire sign Aries. Aries is the first sign of the zodiac, the seed, the new beginning, the hero. Its keywords are “I am” and “I initiate”. The symbol for Aries is the horned ram who rushes fearlessly into new situations, heedless of danger with no consideration for others. Arians are true individuals, keen to build their own personality and ego. The typical Arian is independent and adventurous, displaying strength, boldness, initiative and courage. Negatively they can be angry, headstrong, selfish, domineering and arrogant. Arians need to learn how to cooperate with others, complete projects they have started and conserve their energy. If you want to annoy an Aries, boss them around or tell them to calm down! Each zodiac sign rules a part of the body. For Aries this is the head. When Arians are out of balance they often suffer from headaches, migraines and injuries to the head. And the Aries colour is red. When we get angry we talk about ‘seeing red’.

The Dendera Zodiac

Next month we’ll be taking a look at the famous Dendera Zodiac carved on the ceiling of the Temple of Hathor in Egypt back in 50 BC. In the meantime, see if you can spot the twelve signs of the zodiac in the image below.



April Moon Calendar

Launch projects at the New Moon, bring them to completion in the period from just before the Full Moon to the Third Quarter phase and wind them down and reflect on developments in the week before the next New Moon. The period between the New Moon and the Full Moon is the waxing moon (moon getting bigger and fuller). The period between the Full Moon and the New Moon is the waning moon (moon getting smaller and slimmer).

Many of you have written asking for info on the best time to cut your hair or wax/shave your legs. You can use this moon table to select the most favourable days to slow or increase hair regrowth. Full instructions can be found in my Lunar Hair Care guidelines at www.stellastarwoman.com/files/LunarHairCare.pdf but to get you started I've marked the best dates for waxing/shaving to slow regrowth in yellow and the best dates to cut hair for thicker, lusher growth in green. If you're serious about Lunar Hair Care - order your own 2010 Moon Calendar then you'll know exactly what time the moon changes from one zodiac sign to the next.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sign</u>	<u>Element</u>	<u>Moon Phase</u>
1 st -3 rd	Scorpio	Water	Third Quarter
3 rd -5 th	Sagittarius	Fire	
5 th -7 th	Capricorn	Earth	
7 th -10 th	Aquarius	Air	
10 th -12 th	Pisces	Water	New Moon 14th
12 th -15 th	Aries	Fire	
15 th -17 th	Taurus	Earth	First Quarter
17 th -19 th	Gemini	Air	
19 th -22 nd	Cancer	Water	
22 nd -24 th	Leo	Fire	Full Moon 28 th
24 th -26 th	Virgo	Earth	
26 th -28 th	Libra	Air	
28 th -30 th	Scorpio	Water	
30 th	Sagittarius	Fire	

Thanks for being part of AstroUpdate. If there's something you'd like to see featured, or have something you think would interest others, please contact me at stellaw@ozemail.com.au

PS – Don't forget to check out your April Monthly Stars at www.stellastarwoman.com to see what's coming up for you this month.

Happy Stargazing

Stella Woods

