

STARS

It's all in the timing! No matter who you are or what you've done in the past year - this is the time to get a brand-new start. This is not only the beginning of a new cycle, it is a One-Year and of special significance not only for the numerologists among us but for all who want to start 2008 right! Mars is facing off with Pluto today and this is the perfect time to focus *not* on frustration and power struggles but on making sure life is going your way by planning ahead and making progress and your dreams and visions. Use astrology to meet your yearly goals, whether you're aiming for love, a better job, or a trip around the world. Consult your 2008 Forecast for expert guidance.

ARIES: Due to your strong will and self-assuredness, you are one of the Signs who is most likely to keep your New Year's resolutions. However, there's no reason you shouldn't try to loosen your rigid thinking and relax a bit this coming year. Make a promise to yourself to live just a bit more in the moment; a hint of spontaneity will lend some much-needed adventure to your life. A moment on the edge doesn't mean you'll lose all control.



TAURUS Make this coming year the *Year of Giving to Others*. We're not saying that you're selfish, but you do have a tendency to think of yourself first and foremost! So, start putting your loved ones first in the New Year. You don't have to think big here, either — you'll be surprised at how small gestures like helping a neighbor in with their groceries or offering to give a coworker a ride to work when their car is in the shop will get you huge doses of appreciation.



GEMINI: Use your natural curiosity to your advantage. Take the opportunity to really learn something new this coming year. Don't just skim the surface, but really delve deeply into a topic that interests you. If you've been thinking of getting an advanced degree, it's time to stop talking about it and just do it! Where there's a will, there's definitely a way. If you can



find a way to harness some of that scattered energy, the sky is the limit.

CANCER: Use the coming year to branch out and expand your social circle. There's nothing wrong with being a family-oriented homebody, but it's time to get a bit more broad in terms of who you let into your life emotionally. Set your reservations aside for just a while and soon you'll figure out that your world can be enhanced — not threatened — by meeting new people and welcoming them into your realm.



LEO: No one knows better than the Lion how to use charm to gain an audience, which is why your New Year's resolutions should be based on letting someone else share the stage with you for once. You love being the center of attention, but this year is your time to step aside, if just for a few moments, and realize that life isn't necessarily all about you. Okay, maybe it is — but it's also about giving other people at least some of the accolades you crave for yourself! You might just enjoy being part of an ensemble cast.



VIRGO: Resolutions are about stepping out of your comfort zone, which means you need to challenge yourself to do something that isn't within your normal routine. Start by taking a different route to work or school and venture out into the world when you have spare time. Soon you'll find there's an expansive planet full of adventure to explore, and that being reasonable and prudent — while admirable — isn't your ticket to excitement.



LIBRA: You've definitely got the outgoing, social thing down, but now it's time to work on your inner self. Could you be masking some deep unresolved feelings with your penchant for always being the one who asks probing questions of others but rarely asks them of yourself? This year is the time for self-reflection. Outside help in the form of counseling — one on one, not group! — may be an avenue you want to pursue in order to reach optimum happiness in 2008.



SCORPIO: It might be time to turn down the intensity just a bit. You certainly aren't lacking passion and drive in your life — which isn't a bad thing — but it can be a bit off-putting for the people you care about.



Repeat this to yourself: "I will lighten up, I will lighten up" and then really try to do it. Baby steps are the key; it's okay to remain deeply invested in the things that matter, but that means letting some of the other smaller things go.

SAGITTARIUS: If the worst thing you can think of is being confined, you're not alone; your fellow Sagittarians are right there with you! However, this year, why not try putting down some roots where there previously weren't any? Allowing yourself to have a stronger foundation might be scary at first, but it also means gaining new friends and giving yourself a sense of security that you might not even know you crave.



CAPRICORN: As the year draws to a close, you are no doubt busy reflecting on your past achievements as well as making lists for what you want to accomplish in the New Year. While it probably isn't possible for you to stop making lists completely, why not try to ease up just a bit on the strict regimens you've set for yourself? Spontaneity doesn't have to lead to all-out chaos, and this is the year for you to explore the concept of just letting things happen rather than planning out every last detail.



AQUARIUS: It's nothing you haven't heard before, but it really would be a good time to tone it down a bit! You delight in being eccentric and unconventional, but the New Year is a time to turn over a new leaf. You don't have to completely blend in with the rest of the pack, but you don't have to completely stand out from it, either. Try going down the road most-traveled instead of taking the long way home — you might be surprised to find that the things you thought were pedestrian really aren't after all.



PISCES: Resolve here and now not to let yourself get taken advantage of, or to let anyone talk you into doing something you truly don't want to do. Your soft spot for people who are down on their luck is admirable, but the old saying "stand for something or you'll fall for anything" really applies to you. We're not saying you have to stop helping people altogether, as compassion is one of your best traits, but you'll be much happier if you try to put yourself at the top of your "people to help today" list.



I really didn't want to write this. Some people might think it's cathartic, but I think it's just plain self-indulgent to share your problems with the whole world through the power of the written word. Then again, I'm not really sharing my problems per se, I'm actually providing some insight about skinny people and why they're so skinny. I think it's important to know what's really behind those boyish hips and hollow cheekbones and to think twice before striving to be like someone who isn't just thin, but actually deeply unhappy.

Think Victoria Beckham, Lindsay Lohan and Nicole Richie are painfully thin because they're constantly on a strict regime of diet and exercise? Think again, take your gaze off their jutting hip and collar bones and look deep into their eyes and observe a sense of emptiness and suffering. I could be wrong, and apart from the legal responsibility I have to state this as purely opinion rather than fact, I do believe that these women are not just starving themselves physically, but emotionally

The Fat Diaries

too because they're in a profound state of turmoil. I feel it because I've been there.

I went through a painful experience a couple of months ago. I'll spare you the gory details, as it will take away from the actual story I'm trying to get across here. When you're very miserable or suffering

to some degree, the emotional torment that your body goes through forces your body to go into an odd state of being. Apart from the fact that crying your heart out every night actually burns loads of calories, you actually forget to eat.

And when half the day passes by and you start to

feel faint, when you do attempt to put something in your mouth you feel sick and swallowing just a mere mouthful is a veritable strain. Then there's the not sleeping from endless fretting and purging yourself into exercise so you find ways to distract your mind. Throughout this period I

Victoria Beckham may not be super-thin because she diets like a maniac, she might actually be going through a traumatic period of sadness and depression says Faye Marchant

dropped an entire dress size in a week and another dress size in a month. Yet last year when I like mad, I still found it impossible to shift the flab. Finally I gave up and I'd put it down to the Dubai stone and hitting my 30s. I was pretty much convinced that I would never be a size eight again no matter how much I exercised and dieted. So convinced was I, that I chucked my size eight jeans and went out and purchased a healthy size 12.

But now in retrospect, I have a different theory. I was a size 12 because I was in a natural happy place, I was relaxed and I was not fraught with pain and torment. I had found peace for once in my life.

Rewind back to my size eight days and I actually remembered that I was again going through a period of mourning and suffering similar to a couple months back. There were days when I hardly ate or slept and eating was just a way to stop myself fainting rather than a pleasure of the senses I don't remember tasting or enjoying food at all. In fact, it became a bit of a chore if anything.

Anyway, the moral in this story is that I'd rather be a happy and settled size 12 than a fraught and distressed size eight any day. Hopefully, I'll get over this difficult period and finally put the weight back on and find that happy girl I once was I never thought. I'd hear myself saying this, but being thin does have - its drawbacks. Some girls are naturally skinny and will always be, no matter their emotional state. On the other hand girls who drop up to two sizes in a short space of time might be dealing with something far more fundamental than how many calories have been consumed and burned that day. You can indeed be too rich and too thin and in essence, unhappy.