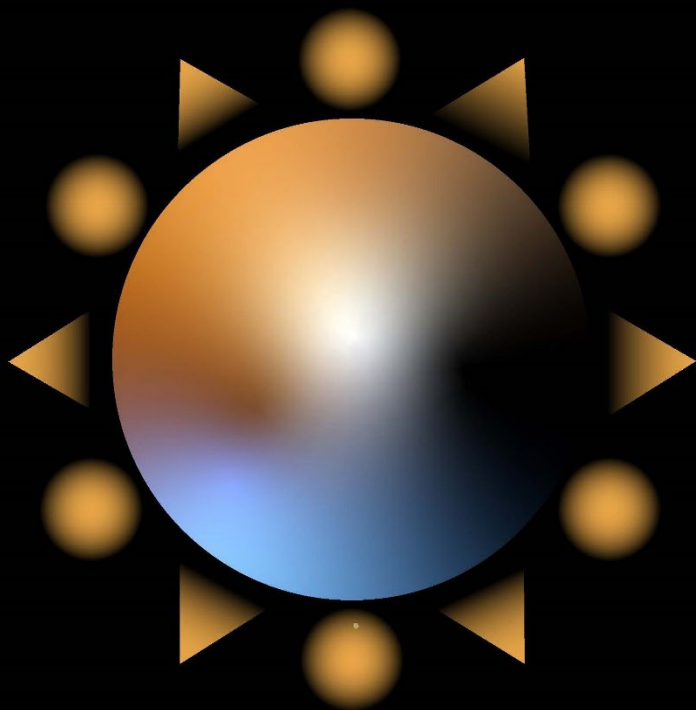


The Twelve States of Bliss

Witnesses of Consciousness



JÉRÔME ZENASTRAL

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Preface

This book explores the intimate link between mindfulness and the universal quest for happiness.

This book refers to the 12 signs of the zodiac, suggesting a connection between these astrological signs and the "12 blisses". By exploring the twelve astrological signs and their luminous qualities in synchronicity with the 12 fundamental blisses, the author reveals how mindfulness and self-care can serve as a natural corrective to overcome obstacles and return to our true essence.

This book offers a journey that combines the teachings of spiritual masters such as Jérôme Calmar, Eckhart Tolle, Francis Lucille and Rupert Spira, with insights into astrology. Through anecdotes, practical exercises and inspiring reflections, the author guides us towards a better understanding of ourselves and others, while helping us to cultivate harmonious relationships.

"The twelve states of bliss, witnesses of consciousness"¹ is a book for anyone seeking to deepen their practice of mindfulness. Touching on subjects such as astrology, spirituality and meditation, this book offers a holistic approach to understanding our place in the universe and invites us to live our full potential as human beings.

¹This book is part of a trilogy comprising three works, "The twelve states of bliss, witnesses of consciousness", "Essay on Universal Harmony " and "Astrology and Mindfulness".

Introduction

Mindfulness, also known as "right mindfulness", is a practice that awakens in us the fact that we are conscious of existing. Practising mindfulness means being fully present in the present moment. It involves being passively alert to the experience of each passing moment. It means paying attention to what we are doing (breathing, eating, walking, listening to music, working, practising a sport, being active on a daily basis, etc.). It means welcoming what we are feeling at a given moment (our physical sensations, our emotions, etc.). It means observing our thoughts as they appear and disappear. What comes is accepted without judgement (we don't decide whether it's good or bad, desirable or undesirable), without expectation (we're not looking for something specific). By being fully present in the moment, emotional well-being improves.

Mindfulness, as a practice that enables us to connect with Consciousness, encourages us to explore its profound nature. The teachings of philosophers such as Francis Lucille, Rupert Spira and Eckhart Tolle offer complementary and enlightening perspectives on this vast subject.

The philosophers Francis Lucille, Rupert Spira and Eckhart Tolle all consider Consciousness to be the fundamental reality of existence. Lucille sees Consciousness as non-dual, present in all experiences, and both subject and object. Spira sees it as the essence of individual experience, omnipresent and unchanging.

Tolle sees it as the silent inner presence that observes and bears witness to our thoughts, emotions and perceptions.

According to the dualistic perspective, infinite and eternal Consciousness is the source of all that exists and is therefore the basis of our existence. It is already fully aware of itself and all that exists. Spiritual practice can enable us to perceive our true nature as a manifestation of infinite and eternal Consciousness.

Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, advocated meditation as a means of achieving enlightenment and freedom from suffering. Epictetus, a Stoic philosopher, considered mindfulness essential for acquiring wisdom and serenity by accepting what we can and cannot do. Seneca, another Stoic, saw it as a means of achieving peace of mind and serenity by concentrating on the present moment. Philosopher Alan Watts believes that mindfulness helps us to understand reality, our place in the world and our connection to the universe. Medical professor Jon Kabat-Zinn has popularised the practice in the West, highlighting its benefits in terms of mental health, stress reduction and a more fulfilling life.

Now that we have discussed the principles of mindfulness, Consciousness and the importance of this practice for our emotional well-being, it is essential to examine the challenge that hinders our spiritual quest and our connection with our true nature.

In this book, we will call this loss of connection 'the fall'.

In the following chapters, we will discuss what the ego is and explore this idea of the Fall and how it manifests itself in our daily lives, as well as how we can overcome these obstacles to realise our true potential as conscious human beings.

The ego: a real entity or an illusion?

Before plunging into the study of the ego, it is necessary to clarify that, in the context of this exploration, we will define Consciousness as "that which in us knows that we are conscious of existing". We consider this fact, universally accepted, to be a fundamental and non-negotiable truth, serving as a solid foundation for any discussion or theory on Consciousness and the ego. In addition, we will explore how this Consciousness interacts with our thoughts, feelings and perceptions to form our overall experience of ourselves and the world around us...

We are aware of the existence of a silent presence that observes, witnesses and experiences. We are aware of thoughts, emotions and sensations. We also remain conscious when all thoughts, emotions and sensations have dissipated.

The ego, the subject of much debate and discussion, remains an enigmatic and elusive concept. We cannot concretely prove its existence, which leads us to the conclusion that it does not exist in the material sense of the term. However, despite this realisation, we persist in believing in the existence of an ego, in the idea of a distinct entity. This belief in the ego is similar to our experience when we watch a film. Even though we know intellectually that what we are seeing is fiction, our

emotions are involved: we laugh, we cry, we feel fear or excitement. This is the paradox of human consciousness: knowing that something is not real, but experiencing it as if it were.

When we say "me", we are referring to a feeling of being someone. This feeling is constructed by a multitude of factors: our upbringing, our name, our nationality, our character traits, our memories, and what our parents and society have instilled in us. In this sense, the ego can be seen as a construct, an aggregate of thoughts, emotions, fears and opinions.

The ego is strengthened by forming and defending opinions. It is therefore, in essence, a thinking machine. Memories, conflicts, fears: all are products of this machine, thoughts that collide and interact with each other.

The ego, this collection of thoughts, perceives itself as a distinct entity. For this perception to occur, and knowing that as an aggregate of thoughts the ego cannot be conscious of itself, there must be a fusion between this image of the ego and Consciousness - Consciousness, it bears repeating, is understood as "that which in us knows that we are conscious of existing".²

²A dialogue between physicist David Bohm and philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti touched on deep and complex questions about the nature of consciousness and the ego. Their exchange illustrates how the question of why consciousness seems to divide and create the illusion of a separate ego - is both fascinating and difficult to answer. Krishnamurti's response, that it happens 'out of innocence', suggests

The more attentive we are to our thoughts and actions, the more the distinction between "me" and "I" becomes blurred. When we are less attentive, less present, the ego - the "I" - becomes dominant. It becomes a separator, the focus of all concern, putting the individual first and others second. It is built on a quest for security and stability.

Social inequalities, exploitation, national conflicts, ideologies, wars, injustices: all these phenomena can be seen as manifestations of the ego - a phenomenal concentration of individual preoccupations. They are stories of egos in conflict, egos seeking security and vanity or other amusing postures such as the diva, the grandiloquent, the m'as-tu-vu, the king of the world, the great lord, the master of the world, the authoritarian leader, the braggart, the insatiable greedy...)

In the final analysis, the ego is not a distinct entity, but a fictitious and apparently constant construct created by thought. This image, formed since childhood, is perceived as a distinct entity, even though it is not real in itself. This perception of constancy is probably due to the amalgam between this image of the ego and pure Consciousness.

So the ego is not an intrinsic part of our being, but rather a constructed image superimposed on Consciousness. It

that this division of consciousness is not the result of deliberate intention, but rather a kind of inevitable side-effect of the way consciousness works.

is a product of thought which, through a kind of distorting mirror, sees itself as a separate entity. But, in reality, it is nothing more than a projection, a shadow dancing on the canvas of pure Consciousness.

"I am" is an affirmation that expresses our awareness of existence. It is a declaration of our conscious presence, of our being. This statement could be rephrased as "I exist" or "I am", underlining conscious existence without the interference of the ego, of constructed identity.

The true reality of our being is not the constructed "I" of the ego, but the Consciousness that through the "I" observes and experiences. It is part of what allows us to explore the world, to engage in relationships, to create art and science, and to ask profound questions about existence.

Having navigated through the territory of ego and Consciousness, it's natural to ask what science has to say about these subjects. What does current research tell us about the ego and Consciousness? And how does it align with what we've explored so far?

Modern science has made many important discoveries about how the brain works and where our thoughts and consciousness come from. Neuroscientists have identified specific areas of the brain that are active when we think, feel emotions, make decisions and so on. They have also discovered that our brains change and reorganise in response to our experiences, a process known as neuroplasticity.

These discoveries seem to support the idea that our thoughts, emotions and consciousness are the product of physical processes in our brain. However, this does not necessarily mean that the ego is a separate entity that resides in the brain. In fact, many scientists consider the ego to be an emergent product of the complex interplay of our cognitive processes.

There is also exciting research suggesting that consciousness may not be confined to our brains or even our bodies. Some theories propose that consciousness could be a fundamental property of the universe, just like mass or electrical charge. This perspective, often referred to as panpsychism, is still highly controversial and far from accepted by the majority of scientists. Nevertheless, it opens up fascinating perspectives on the nature of consciousness and our existence.

Ultimately, science is a powerful tool for exploring the world and understanding how our minds work. However, it cannot answer all our questions, especially when it comes to subjects as mysterious and subjective as the ego and consciousness. For these questions, we must also turn to introspection, meditation, art, philosophy, and all the other ways in which we can explore our inner experience.

Self-knowledge is not just a scientific quest, but also a spiritual, philosophical and personal one. It's an exploration that never really ends, because there's always

more to discover, understand and appreciate about ourselves and the world around us.

In the next chapter we'll look at a universal concept that runs through many cultures and spiritual traditions: the Fall. This concept resonates with our exploration of the ego and consciousness, as it symbolises that moment when we move away from our deepest nature, pure consciousness, to identify with the ego, that mental construct that believes itself to be a separate entity.

The Fall: separation from our true nature

Before discussing mindfulness practices, it is important to understand a recurring concept in many cultural and spiritual traditions around the world, that of the Fall.

In many civilisations and cultural traditions, the concept of the Fall is a theme that represents the loss of the ideal state, spiritual degradation or disobedience to higher forces. This concept often manifests itself in the form of myths, legends and religious narratives that explain the origin of evil and suffering in the world. The Fall has many interpretations, but it can also be understood as an allegory of our tendency to distance ourselves from our true essence and allow ourselves to be dominated by our thoughts, fears and desires. From this perspective, the Fall symbolises our disconnection from our deep, luminous and benevolent nature. A well-known example of the Fall is the myth of Adam and Eve in the Judeo-Christian tradition, in which humanity loses its innocence and its connection with God by disobeying His commandments. Similar stories exist in other cultures, reflecting humanity's universal quest to understand and transcend suffering and spiritual obstacles.

Here are some examples of the concept of the Fall in different traditions and cultures:

- The myth of Adam and Eve: Adam and Eve's disobedience to God and their expulsion from the Garden of Eden represent humanity's fall from divine grace and the beginning of suffering.

-The Greek myth of Prometheus and Pandora: Prometheus, a Titan, stole fire from the gods to give it to humans. As punishment, Zeus created Pandora, the first woman, and gave her a box (actually a jar), telling her never to open it. Pandora's curiosity led her to open the box, releasing all the evil and suffering in the world, except for Hope, which remained at the bottom of the box. This myth highlights disobedience and the loss of the original harmony.

-The Hindu myth of the Kali Yuga: According to Hinduism, time is divided into four cycles, or yugas. The Kali Yuga is the last and darkest of these cycles, characterised by moral and spiritual degradation. The transition from one yuga to the next is often associated with a fall in spirituality, harmony and knowledge.

-The story of the flood: in many cultures, a flood myth describes the destruction of civilisation by a massive flood sent by the gods or higher forces as a result of human wickedness or impiety. After the flood, civilisation must be rebuilt from the survivors.

-The Aztec legend of Quetzalcoatl and the Golden Age: In Aztec mythology, Quetzalcoatl, the god of knowledge and wisdom, created humans from the bones of previous generations and gave them corn to eat. However, after being tricked by other gods into committing a sin, Quetzalcoatl left Earth, marking the end of the Golden Age. This myth also illustrates the loss of innocence and harmony.

-The Chinese myth of Pangu and the creation of the world: In Chinese mythology, Pangu is a giant who sacrificed himself to create the world. His fall and death gave birth to the elements of the world and to living

beings. Although Pangu's fall is not linked to disobedience or a loss of innocence, it marks a transition between a primordial state of unity and the creation of the world as we know it.

These myths reflect the idea of a fall or a loss of innocence and harmony in different cultures, underlining the universality of these themes in the human condition.

In addition, there are teachings similar to the myth of Adam and Eve that describe a "fall" or loss of innocence and harmony. Here is an example of these teachings:

According to Advaita Vedanta, the non-dual philosophical tradition of Hinduism, our true nature is the Self, which is identical to pure Consciousness and the ultimate reality, called Brahman. This teaching emphasises the search for the true nature of our being, beyond identifications with the ego, thoughts and emotions. In this context, the 'fall' could be interpreted as identification with the ego and ignorance of our true nature, which leads us away from unity and harmony.

Among these various myths, let's take that of Adam and Eve, a central mythical tale in the Judeo-Christian tradition, presented mainly in the Bible's book of Genesis.

The myth of Adam and Eve depicts the disobedience of the first humans towards God, who had expressly forbidden them to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree, thus raising questions about human nature, temptation and

freedom of choice. This disobedience, initiated by the serpent's temptation, led to the major transgression known as Original Sin in the Christian tradition, a sin that would be inherited by all humanity. Before this fall, Adam and Eve existed in a state of innocence and harmony with God and nature, but sin made them aware of their nakedness, causing shame and symbolising the loss of innocence. The consequences of their actions lead to expulsion from the Garden of Eden, suffering, death, hard work to support themselves and the pain of childbirth, reflecting the human condition and its challenges. Despite these devastating consequences, the myth offers a perspective of redemption and salvation, with Jesus Christ in the Christian tradition seen as the new Adam, redeeming humanity from original sin through his death and resurrection. This myth, rich in various interpretations throughout history, continues to fuel debate, with some taking it as a literal account of human origins, while others see it as an allegory of the human condition.

Contemporary author and spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle approaches the myth of Adam and Eve in a different way, emphasising the spiritual and psychological dimension rather than the traditional religious aspect. According to Tolle, the story of Adam and Eve can be understood as a parable that describes the process by which human beings lost their connection with the present moment and became identified with their mind. He suggests that eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil symbolises the development of conceptual thinking and judgement in human beings. This has led to duality, where things are perceived as good or bad, right or

wrong, and so on. According to him, before the Fall, Adam and Eve lived in a state of presence and unity with nature and with God. After eating the fruit, they lost this connection and identified with their minds. This led to suffering and separation from their true nature. The serpent in this myth can be seen as a representation of the mind, which seduces people away from their spiritual essence. He says that humanity's redemption lies in returning to presence, disidentifying from the mind and reconnecting with consciousness. By practising mindfulness and living in the present moment, individuals transcend suffering and perceive the illusion of the ego.

Another Western spiritual master who has tackled the myth of Adam and Eve is Richard Rohr, an American Franciscan priest, author and lecturer. Rohr is well known for his teachings on contemplative Christian spirituality and personal transformation. In his writings and speeches, he offers innovative perspectives on the myth of Adam and Eve. He sees the myth of Adam and Eve as an illustration of how humanity lost its unity with God and creation. Adam and Eve's disobedience and expulsion from the Garden of Eden symbolise their separation from their true divine nature and the fragmentation of the original harmony. In his view, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents the human desire to control and judge. By eating the fruit of this tree, Adam and Eve chose the path of duality and judgement rather than the path of unity and unconditional love. Rohr argues that Original Sin can be understood as a fundamental trauma that affects humanity and cuts it

off from its true divine nature. This trauma manifests itself in fear, shame and separation, and is transmitted from generation to generation. For him, the redemption of humanity lies in personal transformation and the healing of the trauma of original sin. He proposes that, through spiritual practice, individuals can transcend separation and become reconciled with their true divine nature. This transformation involves a movement towards unity, compassion and unconditional love for oneself and others.

It is also possible to draw a connection between Steve Taylor's book "The Fall" and the myth of Adam and Eve, although Taylor's book approaches the subject from a more historical and psychological angle. Taylor argues that humanity has experienced a spiritual and psychological decline throughout history, resulting in a loss of unity and connection with each other and with nature. The myth of Adam and Eve highlights the disobedience of the first human beings and the role of the ego in their fall. Taylor also argues that the development of the ego and individual consciousness contributed to the fragmentation and division of human society. In the myth of Adam and Eve, humanity's redemption comes through reconciliation with God and healing from original sin. Similarly, Taylor proposes that humanity must overcome its spiritual and psychological decline by reconnecting with its true nature and returning to a state of peace and unity. The myth of Adam and Eve underlines the importance of personal transformation in overcoming the consequences of the Fall. Similarly, Taylor stresses the need for individual and collective

transformation to restore balance and harmony to the world.

Equally interesting is the connection between the book "Astrology and Mindfulness" by Jérôme Zenastral and Mona Weinberger and the Fall in the myth of Adam and Eve. In this myth, the Fall symbolises the loss of original harmony and the introduction of duality into the human experience. Similarly, the astrological vision of Zenastral and Weinberger presents the light and shadow sides of each sign, reflecting an inherent duality. The myth of Adam and Eve highlights the ego as one of the factors contributing to the Fall. In the astrological vision of Zenastral and Weinberger, the ego is also mentioned as a distorting element in the energy of a sign and therefore the cause of separation from the Source. In Zenastral and Weinberger's astrological vision, mindfulness and self-care are presented as means of correcting stressful tendencies and deviant behaviour. Similarly, in the myth of Adam and Eve, reconciliation with God and healing from original sin involve personal transformation. According to the astrological vision of Zenastral and Weinberger, the practice of mindfulness enables us to return to the luminous and benevolent essence of each individual. In the myth of Adam and Eve, redemption implies a return to original unity with God and creation.

This myth of Adam and Eve, and all the other myths described above, show that the principle of the Fall is indeed a recurring theme in different cultures and civilisations throughout history.

In the next few chapters, before plunging into the exploration of different mindfulness practices, I propose an introspective pause: a meditative interlude centred on the myth of the fall. This meditation will help us to better feel and understand the challenges associated with the fall. Then we'll discover how various mindfulness practices can help us overcome these challenges.

And finally, in the chapter entitled "The twelve states of bliss, witnesses of consciousness", you will discover how mindfulness and astrology can help us to rediscover authentic happiness.

Meditative interlude: Meditation on the fall

Having explored the concept of falling, it's time to connect with this idea on a personal level.

Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit or lie down. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, focusing your attention on the breath.

Visualise a moment in your life when you felt a distance from your true nature.

This could be a time when you felt separated from others or from yourself, such as a break-up with a lover, the loss of a job, bereavement, the estrangement of a close friend, a move to a new town or country, a family conflict...

Choose a moment in your life when you felt disconnected from our true nature, or a moment when you felt a sense of loss.

Observe the situation without judgement or analysis. Simply try to witness the experience.

Now imagine that you can wrap this situation in a benevolent, soothing light. This light represents acceptance and compassion for yourself.

Take a few moments to feel this acceptance and compassion.

When you feel ready, gently bring your attention back to your breathing and take a few deep breaths to refocus.

Open your eyes and take a moment to integrate this meditation before reading on.

The practice of mindfulness

"Place a sentry at the gates of your senses".
Siddhartha Gautama

This practice involves breathing exercises and focusing attention on the bodily sensations and thoughts that appear and disappear, without trying to change or judge them. Over time, regular practice of these exercises will enable you to recognise the moments when you are separated from consciousness and reconnect with the present moment. This practice will help you to be more aware of your experiences and to find inner peace, regardless of external circumstances.

How are you going to practise mindfulness?

The exercises proposed to you must be practised with a light attention, a passive vigilance on your part, something very close to meditation. It's natural to encounter difficulties. But you will persevere until this practice becomes a new habit.

In this text you will often come across the word "feeling". This word encompasses both sensations and perceptions.

Note:

Every time you feel discouragement, sadness, anger, pain or any other negative feeling, repeat the following positive thought 7 times:

"The inner smile is the greatest good".

Exercise programme

Before starting our exercise programme, it's important to understand how it's structured. The programme is designed as a progression over several 'seasons', each season lasting one to two months. In each season, we will introduce new exercises while continuing or completing the previous ones, depending on how things are progressing. Each exercise has a specific duration and daily frequency, so you can easily integrate it into your daily routine. It's crucial to follow the order and duration of the exercises to get the maximum benefit. Once you have completed an exercise in a given season, it may reappear in subsequent seasons. Finally, in each exercise you'll find comments explaining the purpose of the exercise, how to do it correctly, and what you can expect from regular practice.

Season 1 (2 months)

- **Exercise 1:** Breathing consciously → 1 to 5 minutes once a day
- **Exercise 2:** Be aware of negative feelings → 1 to 5 minutes once a day

Season 2 (2 months)

- **Exercise 1:** Breathing consciously → 1 to 5 minutes once a day
- **Exercise 2:** End
- **Exercise 3:** Being aware of all your feelings → 3 to 5 minutes once a day

Season 3 (1 month)

- **Exercise 1:** End
- **Exercise 3:** End

- **Exercise 4:** Perceiving internal feelings ➔ 30 minutes a day in fractions of a few minutes

Season 4 (1 month)

- **Exercise 4:** End
- **Exercise 5:** Perceiving internal feelings and external (perceptive thinking) ➔ 30 minutes a day in fractions of a few minutes

Season 5 (2 months)

- **Exercise 5:** Provisional end as season 7 resumes
- **Exercise 6:** Perceiving internal feelings and external at fixed times ➔ 30 minutes per day in 10-minute increments fixed in advance

Season 6 (1 month)

- **Exercise 6:** End
- **Exercise 7:** Alternating perceptive and speculative thinking ➔ 30 minutes a day in fractions of a few minutes

Season 7 (every day)

- **Exercise 5:** Perceiving internal feelings and external (perceptive thinking) ➔ as soon as you get up perceive as much as possible and throughout the day if perceptive thinking is triggered naturally.
- **Exercise 7:** End

As you progress through this programme of meditation exercises, I encourage you to read the following sections: "Investigative topics suggested by teachers", "Asking yourself paradoxical questions" and "Additional resources". These sections are designed to accompany your practice, offering reflections, questions and resources that will enrich your experience. The

"Additional resources" section will provide you with links to conferences, online courses, articles and journals to deepen your understanding of mindfulness. To help you overcome the challenges inherent in the practice of meditation, consult the chapter entitled "Obstacles and challenges in practice". Finally, to stimulate you in your approach, don't forget to read the testimonials shared in the dedicated chapter.

Exercise 1: Breathing consciously

Do the following exercise **for one to five minutes a day**:

Sit in a chair, with your back straight and resting on the backrest, but not too stiff. Bring your feet under the chair (cross them, with the heel of one foot on the ankle of the other) and make sure that your knees are lower than your pelvis. Place your hands flat on your thighs. Close your eyes and breathe normally. Let your breathing come naturally, while mentally noting each of your inhalations and exhalations. The words you say mentally should correspond in duration to the act you are doing. If your breathing is rapid, mentally note "inhale" at the moment when the lungs fill with air and "exhale" at the moment when the air leaves the lungs. If your breathing is slow, note "lungs fill with air" when you breathe in and "lungs empty of air" when you breathe out. Adopt the formulas for accompanying the air that suit you best.

Exercise 2: Be aware of negative feelings

The aim of the following exercise is to become aware of your emotions and identify what you feel is unpleasant. Practice it daily **for one to five minutes**:

Action: ask yourself the following question: **What do you feel is unpleasant at the moment?**

Go through and make a mental note of everything you feel **AT THE MOMENT** that is unpleasant, both physically and mentally: a feeling of nausea, painful hunger, bodily pain, negative emotion, fear, repressed anger, a feeling of humiliation, a depressing memory, fear for the future or the consequences of something you have already done or are doing, a feeling of inferiority, etc. If, for example, you feel pain in your arm, make a mental note of "pain in my arm"...

Note:

When you make a brief note of the unpleasant feeling without dwelling on it too much, the unpleasant intensity generally tends to diminish considerably.

Exercise 3: Being aware of all your feelings

To become more aware of your emotions and what you feel or perceive, practise the following exercise every day for three to five minutes:

Action: ask yourself: **What do I feel or perceive at this moment?**

Review and make a mental note of everything you feel and perceive AT THE MOMENT. If you're walking, make a mental note of "the sensation of walking". If your stomach hurts, take note mentally "stomach pain". If a car passes in the street, take note mentally "car in the street". If you smell something cooking, take note mentally "cooking smell". Take note mentally all the perceptions that come to mind without dwelling on every detail. Take note and move on without analysing. The essential thing is to be aware of what is felt or perceived.

Exercise 4: Perceiving internal feelings

This exercise takes place in everyday life, at times when you are not too absorbed in activities requiring conceptual or speculative thinking. For example, practise it on the way to work, while walking, on public transport, etc.

In periods of a few minutes, over a period of 30 minutes a day, try to remain constantly aware of the sensations felt in your body without ever naming them (unlike in exercise 2, where you made a mental note of what was perceived): the feeling of your feet on the ground, your breathing or heart rate, the sensations caused by the movement of your arms or legs, etc. Try to feel your emotions without associating them with words or images, simply allowing them to flow through you.

At first, and for several weeks afterwards, it is normal for your thoughts to focus on your feelings. Don't try to fight them, because the weapons you use are the thoughts themselves. Let the thoughts manifest themselves and maintain pure perception of internal sensations.

A good month of this practice is necessary before moving on to exercise 5.

Exercise 5: Perceiving internal and external sensations (perceptive thinking)

The aim of this exercise is to perceive without words your internal sensations and what you see or hear.

Try to remain constantly aware of the sensations you feel in your body without ever naming them (unlike in exercise 2, where you made a mental note of what you perceived): the feeling of your feet on the ground, the rhythm of your breathing or heartbeat, the sensations caused by the movement of your arms or legs, etc. Try to feel while trying not to think in words or images about what you feel. Try to feel while trying not to think in words and images about what you are feeling.

Immediately after perceiving an internal sensation, move on to perceiving an external sensation. Remain attentive to what is happening around you, both visually and aurally, without passing judgement, putting into words or describing what is seen or heard.

Take all the time you need. Don't rush. **Practise every day for at least 30 minutes, in fractions of a few minutes, and much more if possible.**

Exercise 6: Perceive internal and external feelings at a fixed time

Continue with perceptive thinking (as in exercise 5) by introducing the notion of a timetable. In exercises 4 and 5, you had to choose the time of day to think perceptually. In the sixth exercise, you are going to practise three sessions of purely perceptive thinking, each lasting ten minutes. During these 10 minutes, you will alternate between internal and external perceptions as indicated in exercise 5. But in this exercise, practise these three sessions at fixed times. For example, the first session should be at 8 o'clock, the second at 2 o'clock and the third at 6 o'clock.

Practise this sixth exercise for at least two months, but take as much time as you need.

Exercise 7: Alternating perceptive and speculative thinking³

Practise the following exercise once a day, at any time: become aware of your internal perceptions and perceptions from the outside world, without commenting on them mentally, as described in exercise 5. Your usual thoughts will try to impose themselves on you. Don't push them away. The main thing is for your attention to be fixed effortlessly on internal and external perceptions for a few minutes. After these few minutes, look at what you are thinking in words and suddenly stop focusing on your perceptions. The result will be a veritable shower of thoughts invading our mind. Among all these thoughts, seize one and try to keep it in your field of consciousness for as long as possible, giving it all its conceptual and speculative character, expressing it mentally in words, monologuing as if you were holding a discourse with yourself. If, for example, this thought concerns a tree, mentally say something about the tree's vegetal nature, the use people make of its wood, and so on. Mentally, speak in sentences about the tree. After a few minutes, stop talking inwardly and try for one or two minutes to return to thinking perceptively.

Alternate between perceptive and speculative thought once a day for a month.

³ Speculative thinking refers to thinking or speculating about abstract concepts or reasoning. Perceptive thinking refers to direct awareness of our internal and external perceptions, without interpretation or conceptualisation. Perceptive thinking is therefore linked to our immediate experience of reality as it presents itself to us through our senses.

Investigation topics suggested by teachers

According to Francis Lucille, any research or investigation must remain totally open, free from any system of thought or intellectual attachment to dogma, and based solely on one's intuition of what is true.

When investigating, it is essential to remain open to all possibilities and not to lock oneself into a framework of thought or a belief system. This means being prepared to question what you think you know and to welcome new perspectives and experiences.

All research requires freedom of thought, which means not being attached to a particular dogma or ideology. Freedom allows the researcher to navigate unhindered in the quest for truth and to avoid the pitfalls of rigid or dogmatic thinking.

Intuition plays a crucial role in a spiritual quest. Rather than relying solely on logic and intellectual analysis, the seeker must learn to listen to and trust his or her intuition about what is true.

The seeker of truth must draw on his or her own experiences and examine them with sincere attention and curiosity. The answers to spiritual questions are often to be found in personal experience and awareness.

Throughout this process, it is important to remain authentic and honest with yourself. This means recognising your own prejudices, fears and limiting

beliefs and being prepared to question them in order to move towards the truth.

Here are just a few of the subjects under investigation:

"Let's see for ourselves whether we appear in our body or in our mind, or whether on the contrary the body and mind appear in us. We have never been in our body. Our body is in us, we are not in it. The body appears to us as a series of sensory perceptions and concepts. This is how we know we have a body, when we feel it or think about it. These perceptions and thoughts appear within us, pure conscious attention. We do not appear in them, contrary to what we have been taught. Let us see for ourselves whether we appear in our body or in our mind or whether, on the contrary, they appear in us." *Francis Lucille*

"You have to refine your senses by looking, touching, observing, listening not only to the birds, the rustle of the leaves, but also to the words you use yourself, the feelings you have. Sensitivity of the senses does not mean indulging them, but simply observing them in such a way that the mind is always alert. In this way, the whole organism becomes alive, sensitive, intelligent and balanced. When you become aware of all this, your fingers, your eyes, your ears, your body, everything becomes sensitive, alive. It's relatively easy. But what's more difficult is to free your mind from mechanical habits. Try to see yourself as you really are, without wanting to correct yourself, change what you see or

escape from it. When such a mind looks at a flower or the colour of a garment or a dead leaf falling from a tree, it is now able to see the movement of that leaf as it falls and the colour of that flower, in a living way. In this way, both externally and internally, the mind becomes highly alive, supple, alert; there is a sensitivity that makes the mind intelligent. Sensitivity, intelligence and freedom in action are the beauty of life." **Jiddhu Krishnamurti**

"Our self knows itself to be present and conscious by itself, thanks to itself, alone. It does not need an intermediary such as the mind or the body - let alone any external source - to confirm its own conscious Presence. It knows itself directly." **Rupert Spira**

"Who am I? The quest for identity is a serious undertaking. If we investigate this personal entity, we will realise that it is a banal perceived object, an amalgam of thoughts and bodily sensations that appear and disappear intermittently. This question must pervade the whole of our lives. This question can take different forms, such as: What is life? What is truth? What is a person? All these questions are equivalent. When one of these questions spontaneously invites us, we must give it our full attention. By doing so, the question remains alive within us. **Francis Lucille**

"Everything seems to be subject to time. Yet everything happens in the present. This is a paradox. We never find direct evidence of time, we never experience time itself. We only experience the present moment, or rather what happens in the present moment. If we stick to direct

evidence there is no time. All there is is the present moment." ***Eckart Tolle***

"Memory seems to validate time, but if we examine this more closely, we see that in fact it validates atemporal consciousness, which never changes. Memory creates the appearance of time, in which objects are seen to exist independently of each other, and through which they appear to evolve. However, we have no experience of a past that extends indefinitely behind the present moment, and we have no experience of the present moment rolling forever into the future. The idea that time is like a container that holds all the events in the world is a temporal representation of consciousness in the mind."

Rupert Spira

"When we grant reality to objects, to an external world, time seems to exist as an interval between two events. When consciousness is seen as an ultimate reality, there is no time, there is only consciousness. Memories are devoid of absolute meaning. Time and space are part of the creation of this illusory world. Memories are part of this vast illusion." ***Francis Lucille***

"Our own thoughts and feelings are, at all times, an inseparable part of the whole. No one holds, owns or chooses their answers. They simply arise, along with everything else. There is no entity that holds, owns or chooses... The separate entity is totally non-existent. It is simply imagined by the mind which exclusively identifies our Self, the consciousness-Presence, with a body. Once we have clearly seen this, the question no

longer arises as to whether this non-existent entity possesses control, choice, free will, etc.... or not." ***Rupert Spira***

"Let's question the notion of a limited and personal consciousness. Let's live with these questions, and above all let's live in the silent openness that follows questioning in the creative "I don't know". In this openness come answers that gradually modify the initial question, making it more and more subtle until it becomes unformulateable by thought. One day the ultimate answer will emerge in all its splendour".
Francis Lucille

Asking yourself paradoxical questions

Asking paradoxical questions or riddles is to provoke deep reflection and challenge logic, seeking to transcend rational and conceptual thinking.

The aim of this exercise is to transcend logic and the limitations of the mind. Paradoxical questions are not designed to be resolved through intellectual or logical answers, but rather to encourage deep contemplation and enable access to a more intuitive understanding of reality.

Here are some steps you can take to ask yourself paradoxical questions:

- 1) Choose a subject related to your personal or spiritual experience: for example, the nature of time, personal identity or duality.
- 2) Formulate a question that defies logic, seems contradictory or has no logical answer, or highlights an apparent contradiction. For example, "If the universe is infinite, how can we understand and grasp the notion of infinity with our finite minds?"
- 3) Contemplate the question: Take the time to think deeply about the question, without trying to answer it immediately. Let the question guide you into an inner exploration of your mind and consciousness.
- 4) Don't get attached to conceptual answers: The aim of paradoxical questions is not to find a logical answer, but

rather to transcend the limits of conceptual thinking and gain a direct, non-conceptual understanding of reality.

5) Be patient and persevering: The process of meditating on an enigma can take time, and it's important not to expect immediate answers or realizations. Keep contemplating the question until you feel a shift in your perception of reality or a deeper understanding of yourself.

Here are some examples of paradoxical questions:

If the universe has a boundary, what exists beyond that boundary, and can we understand it?

At what point does the past become the present, and the present turn into the past?

If animals perceive the world differently from us, which reality is the real one?

If the universe is constantly expanding, where is the center?

Can we really possess anything?

If eternity exists outside time, how can we perceive it in our temporal experience?

If we are both the observer and the observed, who is really observing?

If all our actions are determined by our past experiences and our environment, do we really have free will?

If the past and future exist only in our minds, what is time really?

Additional resources

Here are some additional resources to deepen your understanding of mindfulness and the pursuit of happiness:

Videos:

-Eckhart Tolle's official website URL:



<https://eckharttolle.com/>

-"Guided meditation with Eckhart Tolle" In this video, Eckhart Tolle guides a meditation to help you connect to your essence and live in the present moment. URL:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foU1qgOdtwg>

-Introduction to Mindfulness" - Jon Kabat-Zinn (TEDx conference) Note: Although this video is in English, it is possible to activate French subtitles in the YouTube settings. URL:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nwwKbM_vJc

-The Happiness Paradox" - Shawn Achor (TED conference) Note: Although this video is in English, you can activate French subtitles in the YouTube settings.
URL:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLJsdqxnZb0>

-Christophe André official website URL:



<https://www.christopheandre.com/>

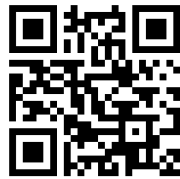
-Christophe André - Meditation: Mindfulness URL:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmCnKWMedAM>

In this video, psychiatrist Christophe André explains the principles of mindfulness meditation and gives advice on how to incorporate the practice into our daily lives.

-Official Rupert Spira website:



<https://rupertspira.com/>

These videos are a valuable resource if you wish to deepen your understanding of mindfulness as a complement to reading this book.

-Mindful.org URL:



<https://www.mindful.org/>

This site offers articles, videos, guided meditations and advice on mindfulness, meditation and well-being in general.

Online course:

-The MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction) Program". - Jon Kabat-Zinn. Site where you can find information on the program and how to follow it online:
URL:



<https://www.association-mindfulness.org/les-programmes-bases-sur-la-pleine-conscience.php>

-The Science of Well-Being" - Dr. Laurie Santos (Yale University online course) URL:



<https://www.coursera.org/learn/the-science-of-well-being>

By exploring these resources, you'll enrich your personal practice and gain greater wisdom and understanding.

Articles and reviews:

On the 3e millénaire magazine site, you'll find publications: magazines, special issues and books. You also have free access to thousands of documents: articles as well as books in PDF format. URL:



<https://www.revue3emillenaire.com/blog/>

Obstacles and challenges in practice

The practice of mindfulness is a path strewn with pitfalls and challenges. These obstacles often reflect our mental and emotional habits. In this chapter, we'll look at common obstacles faced by practitioners, and offer advice on how to overcome them.

Distraction

Distraction is a common obstacle to the practice of mindfulness. Our minds tend to wander, getting lost in thoughts, memories and daydreams. To overcome distraction, it's essential to develop an attitude of benevolent observation towards our thoughts, while being attentive to our breathing or bodily sensations.

Impatience

Impatience is another common challenge in the practice of mindfulness. We often want immediate results and find it hard to accept that the process of inner transformation takes time. To overcome impatience, it's important to understand that mindfulness is a long-term path, that mindfulness is a process, not a destination. Accept that progress sometimes comes slowly. Be kind to yourself and don't judge yourself for the difficulties you encounter.

Unrealistic expectations

Unrealistic expectations also hinder our practice of mindfulness. We sometimes have preconceived ideas about what mindfulness should be and how it should affect us. To overcome unrealistic expectations, it's crucial to accept that our personal experience of mindfulness may be different from what we had imagined.

Testimonials

Here are Testimonials from well-known personalities who have integrated mindfulness into their lives and experienced a positive impact on their well-being and quest for bliss.

Christophe André, French psychiatrist and psychotherapist, is a fervent advocate of mindfulness and meditation. He has written several books on the subject, including "Méditer, jour après jour" and "Imparfaits, libres et heureux", and has publicly testified to the positive impact of mindfulness practice on his personal and professional life.

Jennifer Aniston, American actress, shared her experience of Transcendental Meditation, a technique that involves repeating a mantra to promote relaxation and mindfulness.

Jim Carrey, a devotee of spirituality and mindfulness, has taken part in public events with Eckhart Tolle to discuss spirituality and mindfulness. He has also testified publicly to the positive impact of meditation and mindfulness practice on his own well-being and creativity. He described meditation as a powerful tool for calming the mind and staying centered in the present moment.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, an American scientist and writer, is one of the leading promoters of mindfulness and meditation in the Western world. He founded the Stress Reduction

Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society at the University of Massachusetts. Kabat-Zinn has personally experienced the benefits of mindfulness and has dedicated his life to sharing these practices with others. He has helped thousands of people improve their emotional, physical and mental well-being through mindfulness.

Pierre Rabhi, French agro-ecologist and writer, is also a devotee of mindfulness and meditation. He has testified to the importance of meditation in his own practice of agroecology, and has written several books on the subject, including "La Puissance de la modération" and "Manifeste pour la terre et l'humanisme".

Matthieu Ricard, a French Buddhist monk and writer, is also an advocate of mindfulness and meditation. He has written several books on the subject, including "Altruism: The Power of Compassion to Change Yourself and the World" and "The Art of Meditation", and has testified to the positive impact of meditation on his own well-being and quest for meaning.

Emma Watson, British actress and activist, has spoken publicly about the importance of meditation and mindfulness in her life. She explained how these practices have helped her to manage the stress and anxiety associated with fame, and to find balance in her personal and professional life. Emma Watson said that meditation and mindfulness help her stay centered, better understand her emotions and cultivate compassion for herself and others.

Oprah Winfrey has often spoken of the importance of meditation and mindfulness in her life. Oprah has even organized an online meditation program with Deepak Chopra.

The twelve states of bliss, witnesses of consciousness

Mindfulness is a practice that not only helps us cope with spiritual and emotional challenges, but also brings us closer to our deepest aspiration for happiness. This happiness, which we sometimes long for, can be associated with the ideal state we lost as a result of the fall described in various myths and legends, a subject covered in a previous chapter.

As we have seen, the practice of mindfulness enables us to explore our inner world and better understand our emotions, thoughts and reactions to life's challenges. However, it can also help us get closer to our quest for happiness, a happiness we might be nostalgic for because of our distant connection with an ideal state lost after the fall.

This nostalgia for the happiness we had before the fall can motivate us to look for ways to regain that state of fulfilment and contentment. Mindfulness can be one of those ways, helping us to live in the present moment, to accept our experiences without judgement and to cultivate a caring attitude towards ourselves and others.

By engaging in this practice, we can gradually free ourselves from thought patterns and behaviors that prevent us from achieving happiness and inner balance. In this way, mindfulness guides us along the path to happiness and helps us reconnect with our true nature, which is intrinsically linked to peace, joy and love.

In the next few chapters, we'll take a deeper look at how mindfulness can help us rediscover this authentic happiness and move closer to the ideal state we've lost, overcoming obstacles and suffering and cultivating healthier relationships with ourselves and others.

In what follows, we'll explore how mindfulness can be a means of cultivating a lasting state of well-being and bliss. The states of bliss we experience without even having provoked them should be seen as attempts by consciousness to call us back into its fold. Consciousness may be forgotten by our thoughts and emotions, but it is always present, waiting for us to recognize it. Bliss offers us a gateway to consciousness. By practicing mindfulness regularly, we can learn to cultivate these states of well-being and bliss, and integrate them into our daily lives. By being attentive to these moments of joy, we enable the return to Consciousness. These moments of happiness and joy in life should be seen as reminders of this awareness, prompting us to be more clear-sighted about our experiences and to reconnect with the present moment.

In an ever-changing world, where challenges and obstacles sometimes seem insurmountable, the quest for happiness and well-being remains a universal aspiration. Over the centuries, many philosophies and traditions have sought to define and understand the different facets of bliss. Among them, the 12 felicities - which encompass amazement, voluptuousness, gaiety, fullness, splendor, purity, harmony, deliverance, exultation, wisdom or serenity, freedom and ecstasy - offer a rich,

holistic vision of what it means to be truly happy. This chapter explores each of these blissful states, delving into their origins and their implications for everyday life, to better understand how they can guide us towards a fulfilling and harmonious existence.

When we're in a state of bliss, we experience true happiness, inner tranquility and an absence of intrusive thoughts. However, this state often doesn't last long, as our thoughts regain control and our ego seeks to reinvest its throne. This process leads to a distortion of the initial state of bliss, leading to paradoxes such as amazement transformed into exhilaration, gaiety into nervousness, voluptuousness into greed...

One tool that can reinforce the practice of mindfulness is astrology, which takes a holistic approach and enables us to gain a better understanding of ourselves and our place in the universe.

In mindfulness astrology, the astrological signs not only symbolize the energy fields of the psyche, but are also associated with states of well-being. Each energy field is an opening onto consciousness, and manifests its presence through an original state of well-being. These states of well-being can help us rediscover our center and reconnect with our benevolent presence.

Here, like a "rainbow circle" in the psyche, are the 12 fundamental states of well-being:

Amazement, an invitation to life...

Amazement can be seen as a bliss that results from our ability to be enchanted by the wonders of life, whether the beauty of nature or the achievements of humankind.

Amazement is a state of well-being that testifies to the unspeakable awareness behind presence. When we are in a state of amazement, we are fully present in the moment, without judgment or worry. We're simply there, open to all that life has to offer, ready to be touched by the magic of each moment. We're able to discover the richness of every encounter and experience, and embrace our own existence with renewed joy.

Philosophical perspectives on amazement

Let's explore the different philosophical perspectives on amazement.

For centuries, philosophers have sought to understand and explain this state. For Plato, amazement was the first step in the quest for wisdom. For Aristotle, it was the starting point of all philosophy, for it is through amazement that we begin to ask questions and seek answers.

French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau understood the importance of amazement in our lives. He saw amazement as essential to our personal development, enabling us to see the world with new eyes and relearn how to live fully.

More recently, philosopher Alan Watts has used amazement as the starting point for his own philosophy of life. According to him, we are all beings of amazement, but we have often lost this capacity through the accumulation of knowledge. He believed that the key to regaining this capacity was to remember that we are all interconnected beings, and that everything is a manifestation of the universe in which we live.

Philosophical perspectives aside, amazement also plays an important role in our general well-being and personal development.

Amazement in mindfulness astrology

In mindfulness astrology, amazement is the source of well-being for the sign of Aries. This sign is associated with personality traits such as enthusiasm, spontaneity, boldness and passion. These qualities can certainly contribute to a sense of amazement in a person born under this sign. For Aries, amazement can be a stimulating and exhilarating experience, allowing him to feel alive and connected to something greater than himself. He can be amazed by experiences that allow him to feel free, express his creativity and connect with his deepest passions.

The fall from amazement to exhilaration (or exuberance)

Amazement is a feeling of astonishment and admiration that arises when we are confronted with something new, impressive or incomprehensible. It's closely linked to the present moment, and requires openness and curiosity about the world around us. This state of happiness is not to be confused with exhilaration or exuberance, as an over-excitement of the mind, which is a form of nostalgia for amazement, especially when associated with the quest to regain a state of innocence and total presence in the present moment. This happens when the ego intervenes. Exhilaration or exuberance is a state in which we constantly seek more and more stimulating experiences to make us feel alive and important. We then lose our connection with the beauty and simplicity of the present moment.

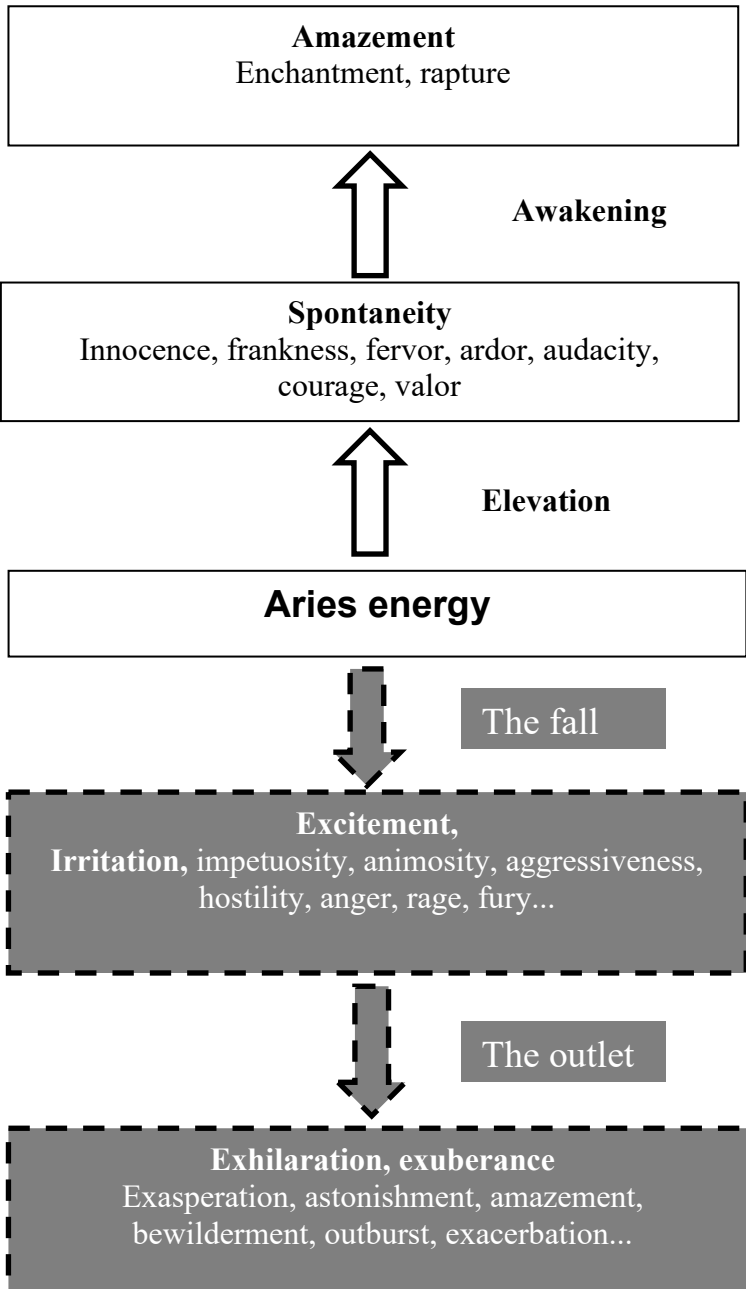
From this perspective, exhilaration or exuberance also seems to serve as a way of trying to relive the moments of amazement of childhood or adolescence, when we were fully immersed in the experience and the thoughts and worries of everyday life didn't overwhelm us. However, this quest for amazement through exhilaration or exuberance, a process engendered by the ego and its conditioning acquired over time, leads to a focus on our own expectations and desires, rather than the pure and simple appreciation of the experience itself.

Seeking amazement through nostalgia for past experiences is a difficult, if not impossible, quest, since

amazement manifests itself in the present moment and is often associated with surprising and unprecedented situations. In this quest for amazement through exhilaration or exuberance, we can identify a form of ignorance, particularly if feeling separated from Consciousness leads to a misunderstanding of the nature of amazement.

This ignorance can be seen as a paradox in the sense that, in actively seeking to recapture amazement, we are actually moving away from the spontaneity and presence that characterize this bliss. The paradox lies in the fact that, in order to rediscover amazement, it is often necessary to give up this quest and refocus on the present moment, being fully aware and open to experience.

The fall or awakening of the sign of Aries



Here are some tips to help you be amazed:

-Practice mindfulness techniques that encourage attentive presence in the present moment and openness to experience without judgment or expectation.

-Take a fresh, innocent look at the world, as if you were discovering it for the first time. This means cultivating your sense of amazement, learning to observe your environment and the events of your life with an open and curious mind, without judgment or preconception.

-Explore new places, meet new people or engage in new activities.

-Be dazzled by life's little miracles, without comparing them to what you've already experienced. Appreciate each moment as unique and precious. Recognize that beauty and magic are all around you, as long as you take the time to see them.

-Try to see things from a different angle.

-Be open to surprises and receptive to unexpected discoveries.

-Look for the extraordinary in the ordinary: even the most mundane situations can be astonishing.

-Explore new places.

Moments of eternity provoked by amazement

Morning dew, the flight of a butterfly, a shell on the beach, a secret garden, a birth, a shooting star, an unexpected gift, wild nature, the first flowers, the reflection of the moon, a rainbow, the freshness of a waterfall, a field of poppies, a shower of shooting stars, the first snowflakes, the flight of a kite, a double rainbow, the leap of a dolphin...

What moments of amazement have you experienced recently?

How can you integrate spontaneity, openness, boldness and courage into your daily life?

Voluptuousness, the scent of roses in full bloom...

Voluptuousness is a sensation that is at once sweet, sensual and spiritual. It's an experience that can be felt through the senses, but goes far beyond mere physical enjoyment. Voluptuousness can also be a path to transcendence.

Voluptuousness is a call to life, an experience to be savored with gratitude, love and simplicity. It is a delicate thrill of pleasure that can make us feel the thrill of a tender kiss, a burst of laughter or a moment of pleasure. It's the scent of flowers, the softness of skin caresses and the warmth of embraces. It's an experience that comes through the senses and transports us into a state of well-being.

Philosophical perspectives on voluptuousness

For the philosopher Epicurus, voluptuousness was the ultimate goal of life. For him, voluptuousness was a state of tranquility and satisfaction, achieved by satisfying natural needs and avoiding excess. He maintained that the happy life was one of moderation, free from pain and suffering. In his Letter to Menecius, Epicurus writes: "We are born for pleasure and for nothing else. Pleasure is man's first and natural good."

Hedonists and some utilitarians also wrote about voluptuousness, regarding it as a central element of their moral and ethical philosophy.

In Eastern philosophies such as Hinduism, voluptuousness is often associated with meditation and contemplation. For example, in Tantra, an esoteric tradition of Hinduism, voluptuousness is seen as a means of attaining spiritual enlightenment by embracing sensory pleasures and transforming them into spiritual energy.

Voluptuousness in mindfulness astrology:

In mindfulness astrology, voluptuousness is the source of well-being for the sign of Taurus. This sign is characterized by sensuality, security, patience and a love of life's pleasures. People born under the sign of Taurus appreciate physical pleasures such as food and comfort. Sensitive to the five senses, they are attentive to natural beauty and environmental pleasures. So, voluptuousness for a Taurus means connecting with your body and appreciating life's physical and sensory pleasures.

The fall of voluptuousness into greed (lust...)

Voluptuousness, that state of happiness linked to the appreciation of sensory pleasures, should not be confused with greed, which represents a form of nostalgia for voluptuousness. Greed appears as a way of trying to relive those moments of voluptuousness when we were fully immersed in the experience, free from the thoughts and worries of everyday life.

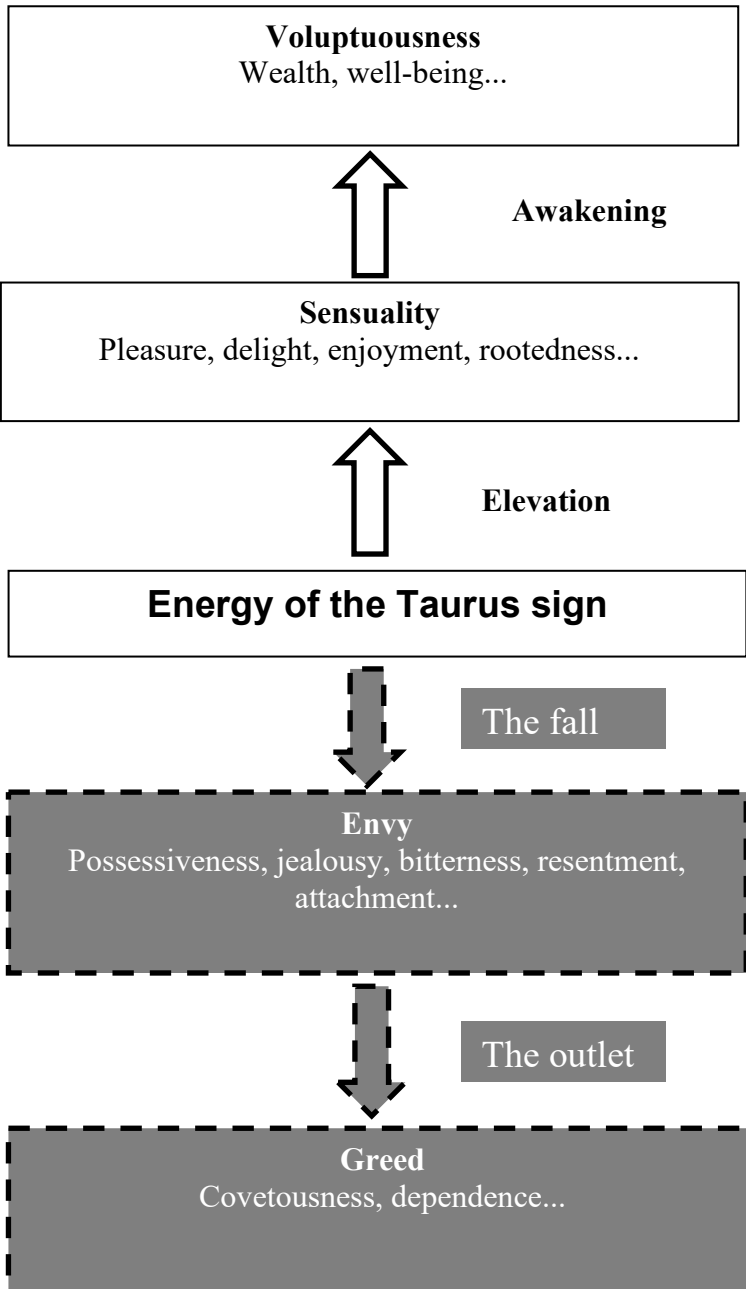
However, in this quest for voluptuousness through lust, we can identify a form of ignorance, especially when the sensation of separation from Consciousness engenders a misunderstanding of the very nature of voluptuousness. This paradox lies in the fact that, in actively seeking to rediscover voluptuousness, we actually distance ourselves from the sensoriality and presence that characterize it.

When we are dominated by any form of dependence, greed or attachment to an object or being, we get lost in a maze of unfulfilled desires, dissatisfactions and jealousies. Greed is a deviation from voluptuousness. To avoid falling into this trap, it's essential to live sensuality in the present moment, aware of the impermanence of all things, and to practice mindfulness and gratitude.

Mindfulness helps us to be fully present in our sensory experiences, paying deliberate attention to every sensation and appreciating every moment. Gratitude, on the other hand, invites us to recognize the value and beauty of the experiences we have, without constantly

seeking to surpass or accumulate them. By cultivating gratitude, we learn to be content with what we have and to appreciate life's simple pleasures, without giving in to the temptation of excess.

The fall or awakening of the Taurus sign



To connect with voluptuousness, here are a few tips:

-Voluptuousness happens in the present moment. Concentrate on the sensations in your body.

-Create an atmosphere that puts you at ease and allows you to relax. Use scented candles, soft music or subdued lighting to help you relax and connect with your senses.

-Take time to relax, connect with your senses and savor every moment.

-Step out of your comfort zone and explore new sensations.

-According to Jiddhu Krishnamurti, you need to refine the senses by looking, touching, observing, listening not only to the birds, the rustling of the leaves, but also to the words you use yourself, the feelings you have. Sensitivity of the senses simply means observing them in such a way that the mind is always alert. In this way, your whole organism becomes alive, sensitive, intelligent and balanced. When such a mind looks at a flower or a dead leaf falling from a tree, it is now able to see the movement of that leaf as it falls, and the color of that flower, in a living way.

By following these tips, you can increase your ability to feel voluptuousness and savor every moment of your life. You're simply there, open to all that life has to offer, ready to be swept away by the beauty of each moment.

By feeling the voluptuousness in your life, you learn to live with delight, to savor each moment with joy, and you're able to live life to the full, to savor the flavor of existence and enjoy every moment.

Moments of eternity cradled in voluptuousness

The caress of a rose petal, the murmur of a stream, basking in the sun, soothing music, walking barefoot on the grass, the sea breeze on your face, a siesta in the shade of a tree, a breeze scented with meadow flowers, lying on the grass, a stolen kiss under a starry sky, the glow of a candle in the night, the delicate rustle of a silk dress, the scent of a jasmine flower, the thrill of a caress, the comfort of an embrace, the smell of earth after rain, a relaxing massage, enjoying a hot bath, savoring an exquisite meal, contemplating a moving sunset; a cherry branch laden with fleshy red currants; the shimmer and quiver of cherry leaves in the sun, the contours of a rolling landscape, the roundness of a ripe fruit, the spiral of a nautilus shell, the curve of a sand dune, the softness of a polished pebble...

What voluptuous moments have you experienced recently?

How can you integrate sensuality, pleasure, delight, enjoyment and rootedness into your daily life?

Gaiety, *meadow flowers, round of children...*

Gaiety is often perceived as a joyful state of mind, characterized by good humor and a playful disposition.

Philosophical perspectives on gaiety

Gaiety is a state of mind that has been celebrated by many philosophers over the centuries. For Aristotle, gaiety was a means of finding balance in life, as it enabled us to strike the right balance between excess and lack.

For the French philosopher Blaise Pascal, gaiety was a sign of wisdom, enabling us to see things in a positive light and be optimistic, even in difficult times.

More recently, French philosopher Gilles Deleuze explored the notion of gaiety in his book "Difference and Repetition". For him, gaiety was a state of resistance against the forces of society that seek to control and standardize us. It was a way of celebrating our own uniqueness and finding joy in our own existence.

Gaiety in Eastern cultures

Eastern cultures attach great importance to celebrations and feasts, which are often occasions for family and friends to get together and share moments of joy and gaiety. In India, for example, the festival of Diwali, also known as the "Festival of Lights", is a time of rejoicing when people decorate their homes with oil lamps, candles

and garlands to celebrate the victory of light over darkness and good over evil.

Gaiety in Eastern cultures is often associated with conviviality and hospitality towards others. Sharing food, laughter and stories is a way of expressing joy and strengthening social bonds.

The Japanese tradition of "hanami", which consists in admiring the cherry blossoms together, is an example of this conviviality and communion with nature.

Gaiety in mindfulness astrology:

In mindfulness astrology, the sign of Gemini is associated with personality traits such as curiosity, communication, lightness and humor. These qualities contribute to the gaiety of a person born under this sign.

For Geminis, gaiety is an experience of lightness and freedom, allowing them to feel connected to others and have fun. They have a gift for communication, humor and sociability, which helps them bond with others and share moments of joy and lightness.

Geminis are also often curious and eager to learn, which can help them discover new things that interest and inspire them, contributing to their gaiety. They are drawn to intellectually stimulating activities, such as reading, writing or discovering new ideas.

The fall from gaiety to nervousness

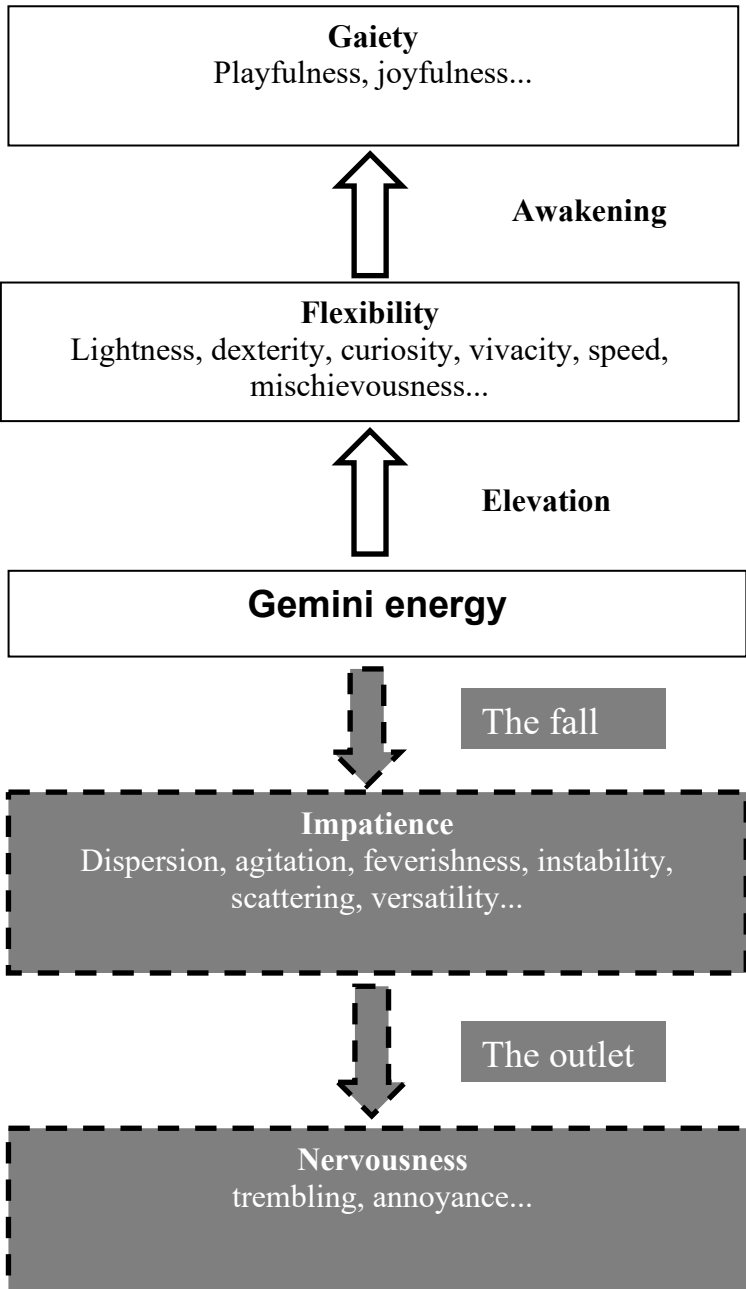
The paradox of gaiety and nervousness highlights an important distinction between true gaiety, characterized by good humor and joy, and feverish excitement, often marked by nervousness, impatience and fickleness.

This paradox highlights how our pursuit of gaiety can sometimes distance us from the authentic experience of gaiety.

When thoughts and the ego take control, gaiety can turn into irritation, a more intense and restless emotion that drives us to seek ever stronger stimuli, to the detriment of our well-being and joy. Excessive adaptability and the constant need to be informed about everything also contribute to this feeling of instability and restlessness.

In short, the paradox of gaiety and nervousness reminds us of the importance of finding a balance between adaptability and stability.

The fall or awakening of the Gemini sign



Here are a few tips to help you connect with gaiety:

- Refocus on the present moment and cultivate mindfulness.
- Reconnect with the innocent joy of moving, communicating, playing and joking.
- Surround yourself with positive people.
- Learn to communicate better
- Try to exercise regularly.

Moments of eternity that brighten our lives

Laughter, an amusing repartee, the subtlety of a pun, a witty aphorism, an amusing metaphor, a witticism, an infant's burst of laughter, a colorful farandole, the complicity of a wink, a round of children, a party among friends, the serenade of a troubadour, amusing games, a clown show, a comedy show, fun, dancing, a toboggan ride, a snowball fight, the breath of the wind, the flapping of a hummingbird's wings, the flight of a hot-air balloon, the graceful flight of a dragonfly, the flight of a butterfly, a flight of swallows, the waltz of fireflies, the spinning of a top, the carefree swing...

What moments of joy have you experienced recently?

How can you incorporate flexibility, lightness, skill and curiosity into your daily life?

Plenitude, *heart at peace, soul fulfilled*

Plenitude is a heightened state of awareness that enables us to live fully in the present moment. It's a state of deep and lasting satisfaction, a sense of fulfillment, whether in personal, professional or spiritual life. In this state of plenitude, we feel fulfilled without wishing for anything more, without any desire other than to prolong the moment into eternity.

Philosophical and artistic perspectives on plenitude

Plenitude has been celebrated by many artists, poets, writers and philosophers throughout history.

Claude Monet's "Water Lilies" series or Georgia O'Keeffe's floral works and New Mexico landscapes evoke a sense of fullness, serenity and connection with nature.

Marcel Proust and Hermann Hesse are two writers who have addressed the quest for plenitude through their works. Proust wrote the monumental "In Search of Lost Time", exploring memory, love and fulfillment through the experiences and emotions of his characters. Hesse tackled similar themes in his novel "Siddhartha", which illustrates the search for fulfillment and spiritual awakening.

Plenitude in mindfulness astrology:

In astrology, the sign of Cancer is associated with personality traits such as sensitivity, nostalgia and emotional security. These qualities contribute to plenitude in a person born under this sign. For people born under the sign of Cancer, plenitude can be an emotional and intimate experience, allowing them to feel connected to family and loved ones and to feel secure in their homes. They are often very attached to their family and home, and can be deeply touched by moments of nostalgia and emotional connection. They are particularly sensitive to emotions, which makes them capable of creating deep emotional bonds with others. This can help them feel connected and deeply satisfied in their relationships.

The fall from plenitude to insatiety (incompleteness)

The paradox of plenitude and insatiety finds its expression in the astrological sign Cancer. Plenitude, being the positive aspect of this sign, represents a state of happiness and deep satisfaction. When Cancer lives in harmony with itself and those around it, it radiates fulfillment. However, this fulfillment can be fragile, because if the individual born under this sign has experienced a troubled childhood, disturbances can arise and take him or her away from this state of grace.

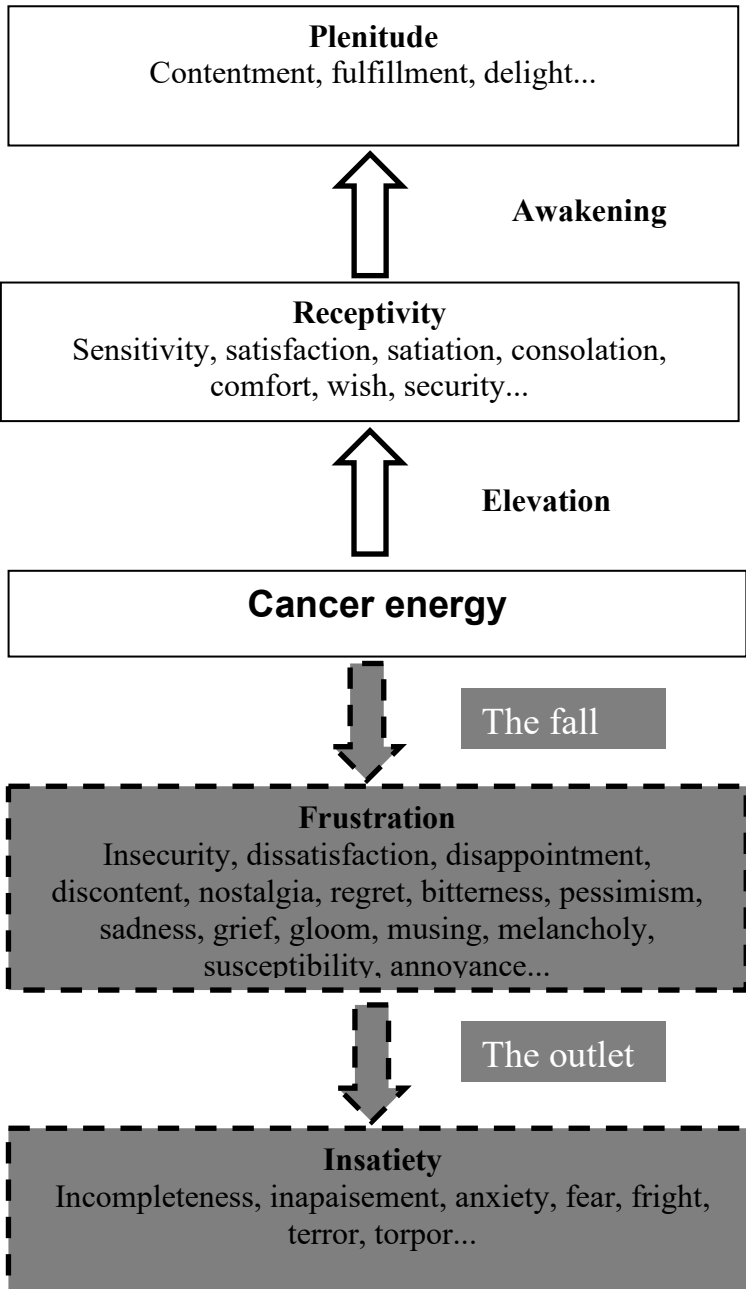
Insatiety or incompleteness, on the other hand, represents the dark side of the Cancer sign. When thoughts and ego get in the way, the person born under this sign can

become overwhelmed by an insatiable thirst for affection. This often manifests itself in an emotional dependence on others, and a tendency to smother or mother them, constantly seeking their attention and love.

Insatiety can also translate into a feeling of permanent dissatisfaction. In this case, Cancer focuses on the negative aspects of its life and on what it lacks or could improve. This critical outlook prevents the individual from appreciating the positive aspects of their life and the things they already have, fuelling a vicious circle of frustration and insatiable quest for greater well-being.

This paradox between plenitude and insatiety highlights the duality inherent in the sign of Cancer, which constantly navigates between these two states. To restore balance and foster fulfillment, it's essential for Cancer to identify the sources of these disturbances and work on itself, seeking to heal past wounds and cultivate a more positive, grateful attitude towards life.

The fall or awakening of the Cancer sign



Here are a few tips to help you connect with plenitude:

-Take time to recognize and appreciate the good things in life. Make a daily list of the things you're grateful for. This can help you focus on the positive aspects of your life and feel more satisfied.

-To be fulfilled, it's important to find balance in your life. Find time for relationships, work, leisure and health. Make sure you devote time and energy to each of these areas.

-Meditation can help you connect with your body and mind, reduce stress and increase life satisfaction. Try practicing meditation for a few minutes every day.

-Positive relationships will help you feel more satisfied. Surround yourself with positive, caring people, and take the time to cultivate meaningful relationships in your life.

Moments of eternity filled with fulfillment

A peaceful evening, a moment of calm, a nap in the grass, listening to birdsong, hearing the rustling of leaves, a state of inner contentment, savoring a meal, wandering aimlessly, being fulfilled by the simplicity of the moment, a sleeping kitten, the waves rocking the shore, a pregnant woman, hatching an idea...

What moments of plenitude have you experienced recently?

How can you integrate receptivity, sensitivity, comfort, security into your daily life?

The splendor, *majesty of the mountains, lush gardens*

Splendor emanates from a divine light, it shines brightly and is infinite. It lies in the zenithal beauty of everything, and in the immensity of the universe. Splendor reminds us that life is a dazzling spectacle.

It invites us to creativity and endless trust.

It illuminates our divine being in all its dignity and generosity.

By experiencing splendor in our lives, we are transported to a place of Self where beauty is celebrated.

Philosophical perspectives on splendor

Splendor is a complex notion that can be understood in different ways by different philosophers and eras. For the Stoics, splendor was a moral ideal, a quality that reflected the nobility and honesty of the soul. For the Platonists, splendor was an aesthetic quality, evoking divine beauty and spiritual perfection.

More recently, French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty explored the notion of splendor in his book "Eye and Mind". For him, splendor was an aesthetic experience that enabled us to grasp the beauty and depth of the world around us.

Splendor can therefore be understood as a quality that transcends moral, aesthetic or spiritual categories. It can

also help us understand our own place in the world, and connect us to a more sublimated dimension of existence, where beauty and excellence are both present and accessible.

Splendor in mindfulness astrology:

In astrology, the sign of Leo is associated with personality traits such as self-confidence, pride and generosity. In addition, this sign is known for its great creativity, which enables it to carry out impressive projects. Leo often has a keen sense of aesthetics and is drawn to artistic pursuits.

These qualities can certainly contribute to splendor in a person born under this sign.

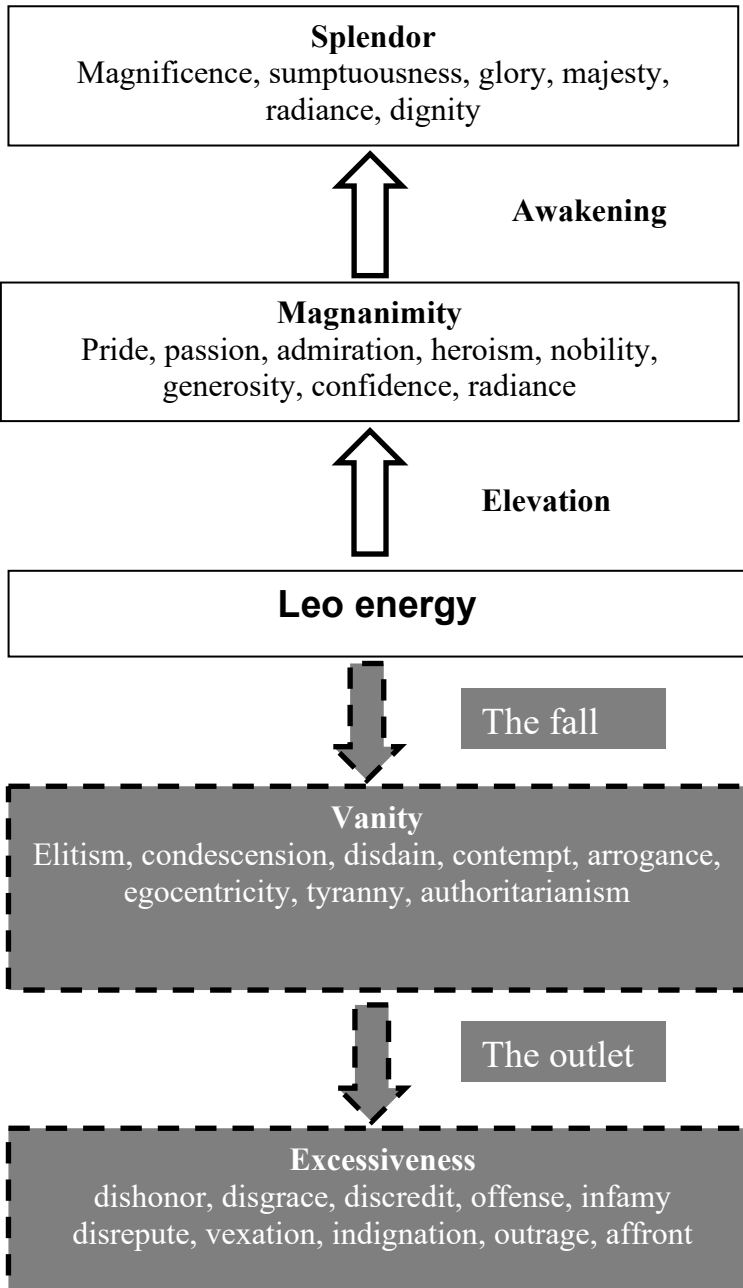
The fall of splendor into excessiveness

The paradox of splendor and excessiveness is an interesting concept to explore. Splendor, in its positive aspect, represents beauty, sublimity and excellence. In the astrological context, the sign of Leo is often associated with splendor due to its majestic nature, self-confidence and charisma. When Leo is in its luminous aspect, it embodies splendor through its self-assurance and radiance.

However, there's a darker side to splendor, and that's excessiveness. Excessiveness arises when Leo is too self-centered, too imbued with its own grandeur and importance. This excessiveness can lead to vanity. This

happens when splendor turns into excessiveness, ostentation and an insatiable quest for recognition. Excessiveness is a deviation from splendor, the energy field of this sign.

The fall or awakening of the Leo sign



Here are a few tips to help you connect with splendor:

-By developing your ability to perceive beauty, you'll discover the splendor of the world around you and find your role in the universe.

-Cultivate a confident attitude towards yourself. You can achieve this by working on your self-esteem, taking care of your appearance, developing your skills and celebrating your successes.

-Create an aesthetic environment in your life, whether through art, music, interior design or anything else that inspires you.

-Aspire to excellence in all things.

Moments of eternity bathed in splendor:

A fiery sky, a glittering ocean, a setting sun, glittering stars, an infinite horizon, the majesty of mountains, the vastness of oceans, the formation of a rainbow, the exuberance of nature, a gigantic sparkling waterfall, the aurora borealis, the splendor of a palace, lush gardens, a symphony, a solemn song, the brilliance of jewels, a masterful firework display, the sparkle of a diamond...

What moments of splendor have you experienced recently?

How can you integrate magnanimity, generosity and trust into your daily life?

Purity, *immaculate snow*,

Spiritual purity generally refers to a state of clarity, simplicity and innocence in which the mind is free from impurities, material attachments and selfish preoccupations. Achieving this state of purity is often seen as a path to bliss, peace and connection with the divine.

Philosophical perspectives on purity

Purity as a state of spiritual bliss is a concept that has been explored by many philosophers, thinkers and spiritual traditions over the centuries.

The Greek philosopher Plato developed the idea of purity in the context of pure, ethereal love, known as "Platonic love". According to Plato, purity of mind and soul is necessary to achieve true understanding and connection with the world of Ideas or eternal Forms.

Buddhism attaches great importance to the purification of the mind and liberation from material attachments and selfish desires. The Noble Eightfold Path is a set of practices designed to purify the mind and attain enlightenment (Nirvana), a state of bliss and total liberation from suffering.

The notion of purity is also present in Christianity, where it is often associated with chastity, innocence and holiness. Purity of heart is considered essential to drawing closer to God and experiencing spiritual bliss.

Neoplatonists such as Plotinus and Proclus developed Platonic ideas of purity and connection with the divine. For them, the soul must rise above the material world and purify itself to achieve unity with the One, an ultimate, transcendent reality that is the source of bliss.

Hindu texts such as the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita speak of the notion of purity and how to attain it through the practice of detachment, meditation and devotion. Purity of mind and heart leads to realization of the Self, the true nature of the soul, and a taste of eternal bliss (Ananda).

Purity in mindfulness astrology:

In astrology, the sign Virgo is associated with personality traits such as analysis, orderliness, modesty and practicality. People born under this sign are often highly organized, enabling them to maintain a structured environment. They are disciplined, efficient and meticulous in their work, constantly striving to improve to achieve high levels of precision.

In short, Virgo is associated with purity, with its corrective or rectifiers such as impeccability and orderliness.

The fall of purity into worry or anxiety

Virgo's quest for order and precision reflects a deep yearning for spiritual purity. Purity is the source of this sign's energy.

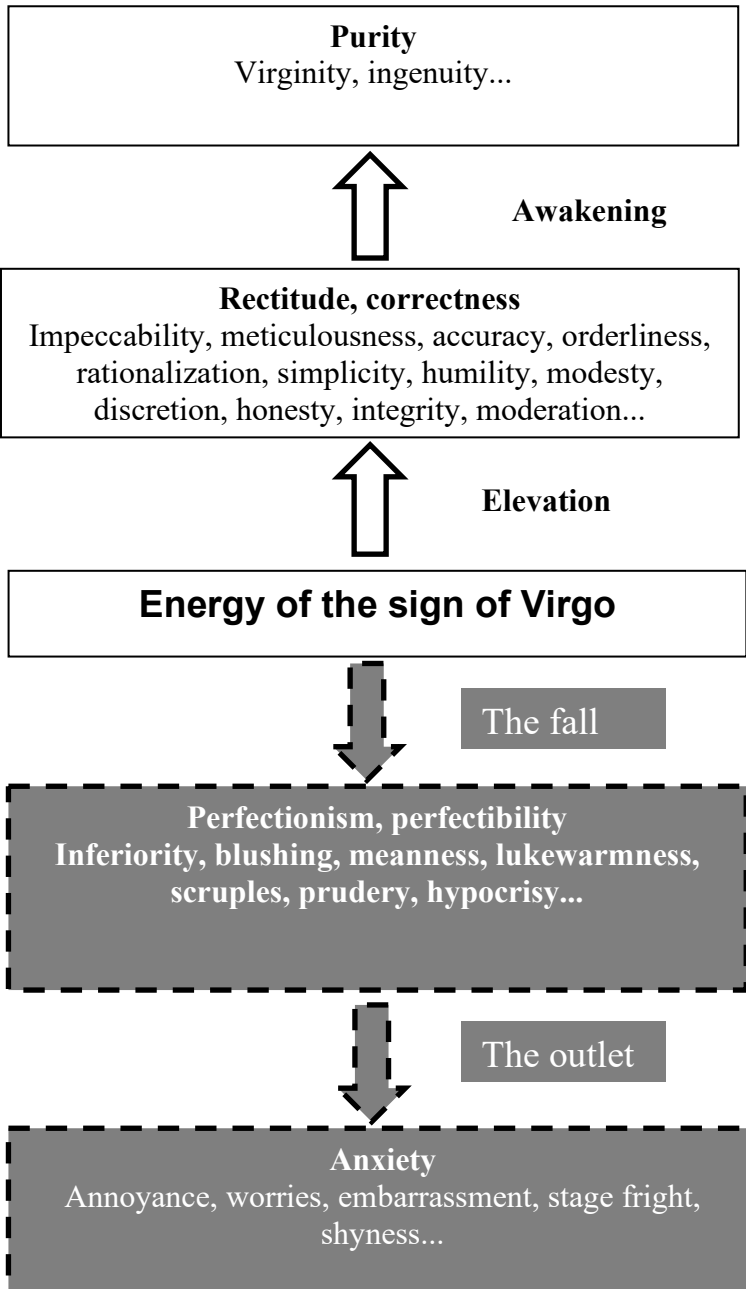
Virgo is associated with qualities such as rectitude, impeccability, orderliness, simplicity, humility and modesty. When these qualities are expressed in a balanced way, Virgo is in a state of purity, virginity and ingenuity. This enables them to function optimally and feel good about themselves and the world around them.

However, when the energy of the Virgo sign is diverted by the prism of the ego, it seeks an outlet to manifest itself. This process often leads to worry, annoyance, hassle, concern, stage fright or shyness. These manifestations of Virgo's shadow side are a source of suffering and hinder their ability to function effectively and live a fulfilling life.

For Virgo, this shadow side manifests itself in traits such as perfectibility, pettiness, lukewarmness, prudery and hypocrisy. When these traits are expressed excessively, Virgos can lose their balance and well-being.

To maintain their well-being, people born under the sign of Virgo must be aware of their shadow side and work to balance it with their positive qualities.

The fall or awakening of the sign of Virgo



Here are some tips for connecting with purity:

-Admit that perfection is an ideal state that can never be attained. For in seeking it, you forget that you already have it within you as pure presence.

-Practice meditation, to refocus on your pure presence.

-Practice simplicity in all aspects of your life.

-Improve yourself through contact with others.

Cultivate non-judgment.

-Surround yourself with people who encourage you to be your best self.

Eternal moments of immaculate purity:

An immaculate expanse of snow, a white sandy beach, a dew pearl, spring water, a mountain lake, a lavender field in bloom, a wheat field, a cherry blossom...

What moments of purity have you experienced recently?

How can you integrate meticulousness, accuracy, order, humility, modesty, discretion or integrity into your daily life?

Harmony, *melody, peace...*

Harmony is a state of spiritual bliss that implies balance and coherence between the different parts of the human being and its environment. In balance, everything takes its place, everything is in harmony, creating a calm, infinite movement where harmony unfolds. Harmony is an inner symphony where emotions are gently united.

Philosophical perspectives on harmony

Harmony is a concept that has been explored and defined in different ways by writers, philosophers, poets and musicians across the ages and cultures. Each has contributed his or her own perspective on harmony and how it manifests itself in various aspects of human life and the universe.

Confucius, for example, stressed the importance of harmony in society, the family and interpersonal relationships. For him, balance and moral order were essential to maintaining a harmonious society. Similarly, Lao-Tzu, founder of Taoism, emphasized the concept of "yin and yang", symbolizing balance and harmony between opposing and complementary forces.

In Greek philosophy, Plato evoked harmony as a political and social ideal in his work "The Republic". He believed that every individual and every part of society should work together for the common good, creating an overall harmony.

Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth and John Keats celebrated nature and its influence on the human spirit. For them, nature was a source of harmony and balance, a refuge from the torments of modern life. Wordsworth focused on the connection between man and nature, while Keats explored the harmony between beauty and truth in his poem "Ode to a Grecian Urn".

American transcendentalist thinkers Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau also shared this idea of harmony between the individual and nature. Emerson wrote about the importance of balancing human aspirations with connection to the natural world, while Thoreau advocated a way of life in harmony with nature as a means of achieving inner peace.

Finally, philosophers Friedrich Schiller and Arthur Schopenhauer emphasized harmony as an aesthetic ideal. Schiller believed that balance and beauty contribute to human fulfillment, while Schopenhauer saw harmony and balance as key elements of beauty that help us transcend life's sufferings.

Harmony in mindfulness astrology:

In astrology, the sign of Libra is associated with personality traits such as diplomacy, cooperation, balance and justice. These qualities contribute to harmony in a person born under this sign.

For Librans, harmony is a cooperative experience that enables them to maintain harmonious relationships with

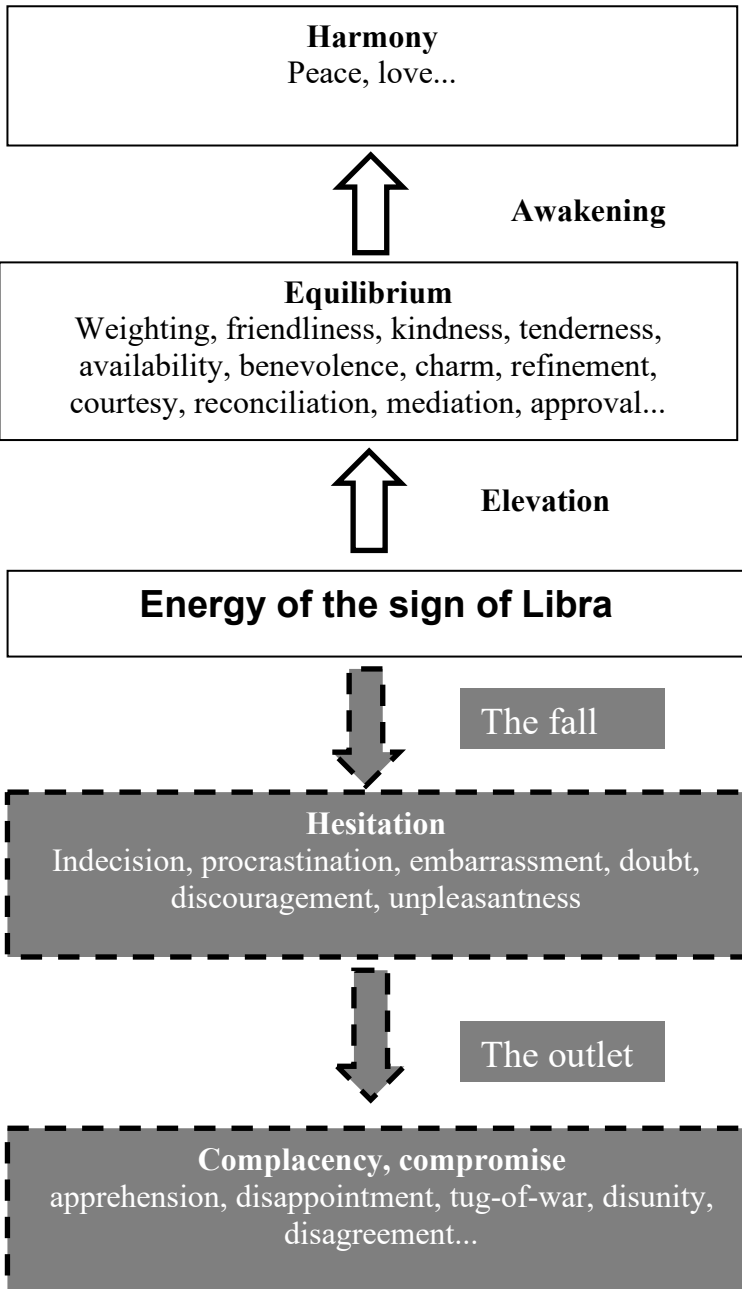
others and live in a peaceful, balanced environment. They know how to resolve conflicts and find balanced solutions.

The downfall of harmony is compromise (or complacency):

The astrological sign of Libra is therefore closely linked to harmony, with balancing factors such as objectivity and balance. Harmony is Libra's source of energy. However, by trying to please everyone, this sign compromises itself through excessive indulgence and lack of firmness. Unbalanced, Libra evolves into the dark side of its sign: complacency, which is a deviation from harmony.

Libra finds itself hesitating between two choices, unable to decide in favor of one or the other. This situation can be interpreted as a quest to rediscover the state of happiness that is harmony, a state that is difficult to achieve and preserve in a complex, constantly changing world.

The fall or awakening of the sign of Libra



Here are a few tips for (re)connecting with harmony:

- Stay at the center of everything without compromising yourself, cultivate inner peace while remaining open and connected to your environment.
- Surround yourself with positive, caring people.
- Listen to music.
- Learn to accept yourself as you are.
- Communicate with kindness.
- Cultivate balance in all areas of your life.
- Develop your creativity.

Moments of eternity cradled in harmony:

A sympathetic ear, the golden mean, understanding, a warm reconciliation, a union of the spirits, love, peace, dancing, sharing, a shared drink, a song of unity, a musical fusion, the joy of a serenade, a melody, a universal chord, a rosy twilight, dawn, dusk, the swaying of trees, the grace of a swan...

What harmonious moments have you experienced recently?

How can you integrate friendliness, kindness, tenderness, benevolence, charm or courtesy into your daily life?

Deliverance, *forgiveness, rebirth...*

Deliverance is a state of bliss that can be achieved by letting go of the temptation to transform the world without first transforming ourselves. This temptation stems from the fact that the energy of transformation that drives us is often directed outwards, towards ambitious projects and concrete achievements, instead of being channeled towards our own personal development.⁴ This energy, which is actually a manifestation of Consciousness, has the function of checking what in our behavior might threaten the balance and harmony of the human community.

By allowing ourselves to be guided by this energy of transformation, while remaining aware of our limits and our responsibility towards the human community, we are placed at the threshold of consciousness, at the frontier between the individual and the collective.

Philosophical perspectives on deliverance

The notion of deliverance, a state of bliss, is present in Western philosophy. Epicurus conceived of it as *ataraxia*,

⁴ According to philosopher Alan Watts, the desire to change others is often a roundabout way of wanting to change ourselves, or of avoiding looking at what's going on inside ourselves. But true transformation can only take place from within, by facing up to our own fears, our own desires, our own nature.

a state of lasting happiness achieved by eliminating fears and insatiable desires. Augustine of Hippo, a Christian philosopher, associated deliverance with the notion of salvation, which can only be attained by the divine grace granted to believers. Nietzsche, for his part, sees deliverance as the overcoming of traditional morality and the creation of a new morality based on the will to power. These philosophers all stressed the importance of letting go and confession in achieving deliverance or redemption.

Deliverance in mindfulness astrology:

In astrology, the sign of Scorpio is associated with personality traits such as intensity, passion and transformation. People born under the sign of Scorpio are intense and passionate, which leads them to live with great emotional intensity. They have a great capacity for perseverance, which enables them to overcome obstacles and turn challenges into opportunities. Determined, they don't shrink from challenges or hardships. Introspective, they seek to understand who they really are.

For the Scorpio sign, deliverance is an experience of profound transformation, where they must modify certain behaviors that could threaten social balance and harmony.

The fall of deliverance into guilt or morbidity:

Deliverance is Scorpio's bliss when in its light side. Nevertheless, by resisting any transformation, Scorpio

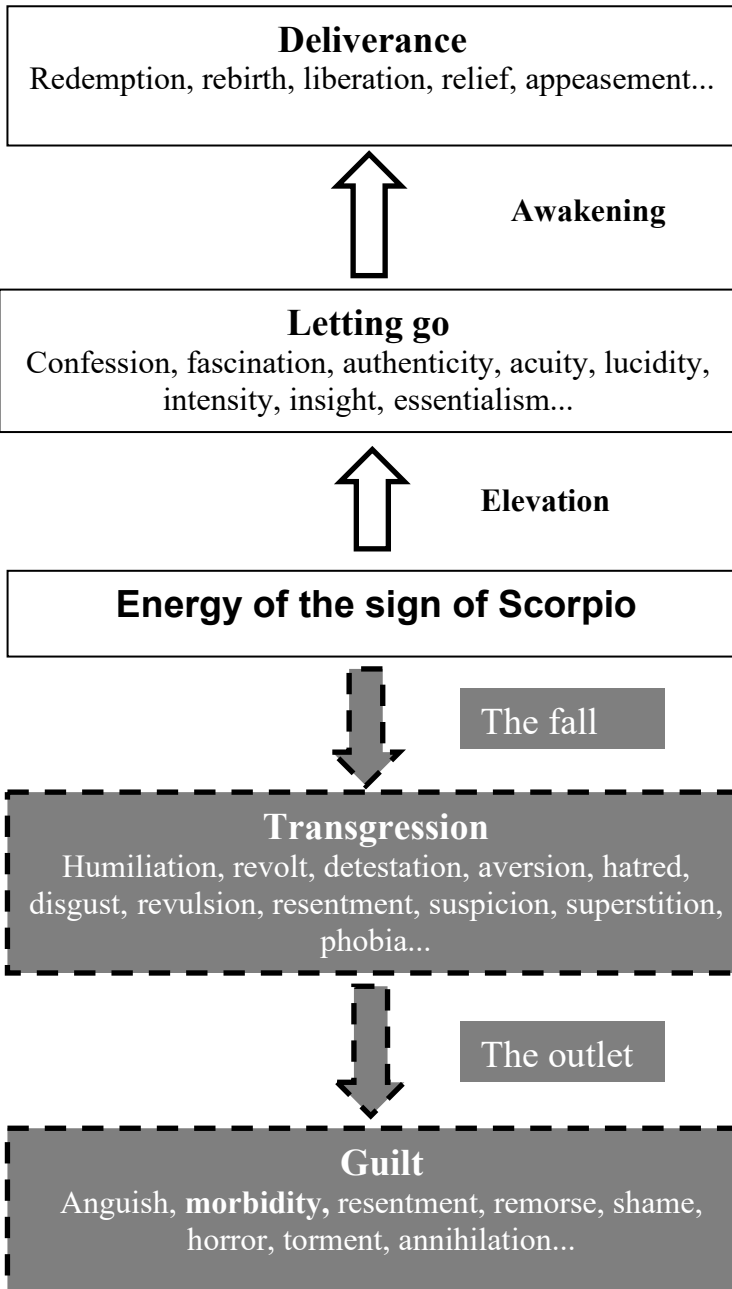
can fall into guilt or morbidity, his shadow side, which manifests itself in an obsession with power and control, as well as a tendency towards self-destruction.

According to astrology, deliverance is the Scorpio sign's source of well-being. But to reach this state, they must abandon all resistance to transformation and change. This means letting go of control, manipulation and destruction, which represent the dark side of the Scorpio sign.

Letting go is a key to the Scorpio sign feeling liberated from the idea of transgression and the desire to wield certain powers. By abandoning the desire to control and manipulate, Scorpions reach a state of detachment and serenity conducive to deliverance.

Letting go also helps to overcome the guilt and shame that result from transgression. By relinquishing control over the situation, Scorpions concentrate on accepting their actions and finding solutions to repair the damage caused. This allows them to free themselves of the negative emotional charge associated with the transgression, and to achieve that long-awaited bliss: deliverance.

The fall or awakening of the sign of Scorpio



Here are a few tips to help you connect with deliverance:

- To feel liberated, it's important to let go of the grudges and resentments that are holding you back. Do this by working on forgiveness.
- Identify the fears that are holding you back and work to overcome them and free yourself from their grip.
- Talk about your feelings, thoughts and experiences with trusted friends.
- Writing or art will help you to release your emotional burdens.
- Seek out support groups, therapists or friends who can help you face your problems and find release.
- Work on forgiveness to free yourself from resentment.
- Be patient with yourself and keep working to find the release and relief you need.

Eternal moments of deliverance:

Confession, sincere confession, revelation, letting go, rebirth, redemption, divine forgiveness, truth, spiritual metamorphosis, true speech, metamorphosis, return to the essential, extinction of the illusion of the ego, spiritual awakening...

What moments of deliverance have you experienced recently?

Comment pouvez-vous intégrer le lâcher prise dans votre vie quotidienne ?

Exultation, *an ode to joy, a celestial cathedral*

Exultation can be defined as a state of intense enthusiasm, jubilation and spiritual elevation. It is often associated with a feeling of transcendence from everyday concerns and worries.

Poetic and musical perspectives on exultation

The American writer and poet Walt Whitman, in his famous collection of poetry "Leaves of Grass", explores the feeling of exultation through his verses. Whitman expresses exultation as an intense feeling of joy and connection with the world around him:

"I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you."

Here is another poem by Walt Whitman that "sings of exultation":

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be
blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or
beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or
leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the
deckhand
 singing on the steamboat deck,

The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter
 singing as he stands,
 The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in
 the morning, or
 at noon intermission or at sundown,
 The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife
 at work, or of
 the girl sewing or washing,
 Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none
 else,
 The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of
 young fellows,
 robust, friendly,
 Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

This poem by Walt Whitman celebrates the joy of
 everyday work, with individual voices coming together
 to create a symphony of everyday life in America.

Beethoven's Ode to Joy, is also closely linked to
 exultation because of its triumphant character and
 celebration of human brotherhood. The symphony begins
 with a choir singing the opening lines of Schiller's poem,
 and the music gradually intensifies, incorporating vocal
 soloists and instruments. The dynamics of the piece,
 together with the grandiose harmonies and melodies, help
 to convey a sense of jubilation and triumph. This feeling
 is reinforced by the poem's central message, which
 celebrates human unity and brotherhood.

Another example of music that celebrates exultation is
 Mozart's "Freude, schöner Götterfunken" (Joy, beautiful

divine spark), also known as the "Lied der Freude" (Song of Joy). It is a song that expresses joy through a message of brotherhood between human beings.

Exultation in mindfulness astrology:

In astrology, the sign Sagittarius is associated with character traits such as optimism, loyalty, fervour and enthusiasm. These qualities arouse exultation in a person born under this sign.

For Sagittarians, exultation is an experience of adventure and freedom, fulfilling their thirst for discovery and exploration. They have a positive attitude towards life, which enables them to make the most of every experience.

Sagittarians also have a great capacity for enthusiasm, which leads them to commit themselves fully to projects and experiences that excite them. They are open-minded and curious, which allows them to discover new ideas and cultures.

The fall of exultation into exaltation

Exultation contributes to the well-being of the sign of Sagittarius.

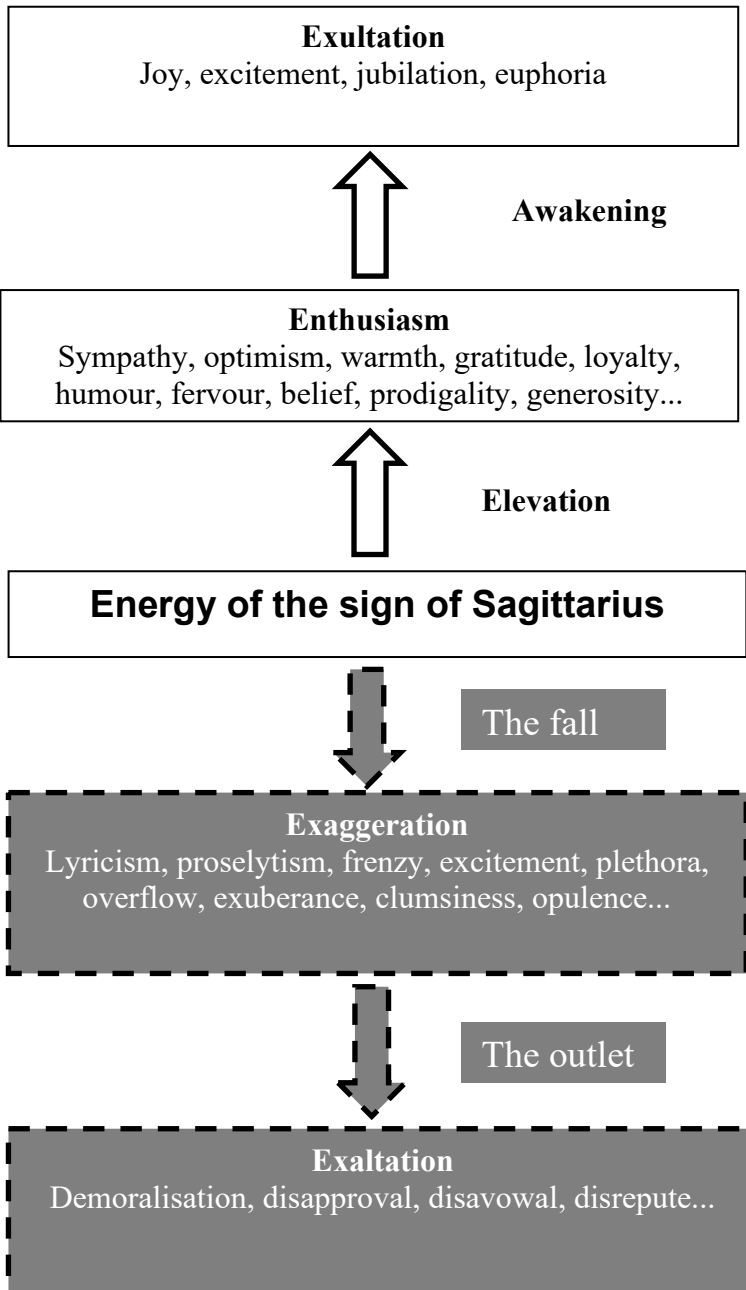
It is characterised by a set of positive traits such as enthusiasm, optimism, loyalty, fervour and prodigality. These qualities help Sagittarians to awaken, blossom and feel at one with themselves and others.

However, when these positive traits are overdone or distorted, Sagittarius can fall into its darker side. Exaggeration, lyricism, proselytising, frenzy, excitement, exuberance and opulence are all manifestations of this excess that can lead to its downfall.

In this situation, the Sagittarian's energy, instead of being channelled into constructive behaviour, is diverted by the ego and seeks an outlet in negative behaviour such as demoralisation, disapproval, disavowal and discredit. This change can be depressing for Sagittarians, who need moderation to avoid falling into this less fulfilling side.

Note: The state of exultation should not be confused with a state of extreme euphoria, which can sometimes be associated with risky or dangerous behaviour. It's important to remain balanced and aware of your limits.

The fall or the awakening of the sign of Sagittarius



Here are a few tips to help you feel exultant:

- Celebrate your victories.
- Cultivate optimism by looking for the bright side.
- Avoid worrying about the past or stressing about the future. Live the moment to the full and enjoy it.
- Surround yourself with positive, caring people who encourage and support you in your plans.
- Avoid negative and toxic people who drag you down.
- Do things that make you happy.
- Join a choir.

Moments of eternity propelled by exultation

A celebrated victory, an ode to joy, a rediscovered friendship, a celebrated union, a distant escape, a triumphant crescendo, a lyrical flight, a musical communion, a rousing fanfare, a fiery popular ball, a celebrated village fervour, a generous Sunday meal, a joyous reunion, songs sung together, distant horizons explored, exotic flavours, fascinating cultures discovered, the complicity of travellers, resonant sacred chants, a solemn organ, a triumphant ovation...

What moments of jubilation have you experienced recently?

How can you incorporate sympathy, warmth, gratitude, loyalty or humour into your daily life?

Serenity, wisdom, *silence, tranquillity*

Being wise and serene means cultivating a calm, thoughtful and balanced state of mind.

Philosophical, poetic and musical perspectives on Wisdom

Wisdom and serenity are concepts that have been explored from different philosophical, poetic and musical perspectives.

In ancient Greek philosophy, wisdom (*sophia*) was considered an essential virtue for achieving true happiness. Aristotle believed that practical wisdom (*phronesis*) was necessary to live a virtuous and balanced life. In Stoicism, wisdom was seen as the key to achieving peace of mind (*ataraxia*) by accepting things as they are and concentrating on what we can.

In Eastern philosophy, the concept of wisdom is at the heart of Taoism and Buddhism. Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* emphasises wisdom as being in harmony with the natural way of things (*Tao*).

Poetry has often been used as a means of expressing the search for wisdom and serenity. Poets such as Khalil Gibran and Emily Dickinson have addressed these themes through powerful metaphors and images. Dickinson, for example, likens wisdom to a light that guides us through the darkness of ignorance.

Rainer Maria Rilke addressed the theme of silence in several of his poems. One example is "Entrance", from his collection "The Book of Hours" (Das Stunden-Buch). Here is the poem in question, translated from the German:

He who enters here must be silent and leave
 Behind him every noise from outside.
 The thick walls here protect the silence.
 Take care not to disturb it.

Here God stands before you, so close,
 Waiting like a tree in the middle of the night,
 With its crown of misty silence,
 And its roots in the infinite.

Take care not to touch the slightest branch
 Of this sacred tree, lest you wake
 The birds sleeping in the foliage
 And disturb them in their sleep.

For if the birds wake and take flight,
 They scatter the stars with their cries,
 And in the depths of limitless space,
 God flees, frightened.

In this poem, Rilke speaks of silence as a sacred and protective space where God stands close to the individual.

Music, as a universal art form, has also been a means of expressing and seeking wisdom, serenity and bliss.

Meditative music, like that of Ravi Shankar and other musicians in the Indian tradition, aims to calm the mind and encourage concentration.

Wisdom in mindfulness astrology:

Capricorns are often known for their patience and perseverance, which allows them to overcome obstacles and progress towards their goals while cultivating wisdom gained through experience. Their pragmatism and realism help them to approach life in a down-to-earth way, and they are able to discern what is achievable from what is not.

Responsibility and discipline are also hallmarks of Capricorns. They remain focused on their objectives and honour their commitments, which testifies to their practical wisdom. Their ambition and determination are qualities that drive them to succeed, and by learning from their experiences, they develop a profound wisdom based on self-knowledge and an understanding of their limits.

Finally, prudence and planning are important aspects of the Capricorn personality. They think before they act and foresee the long-term consequences of their decisions, giving them a wisdom that can guide them throughout their lives.

The fall of wisdom into rigidity

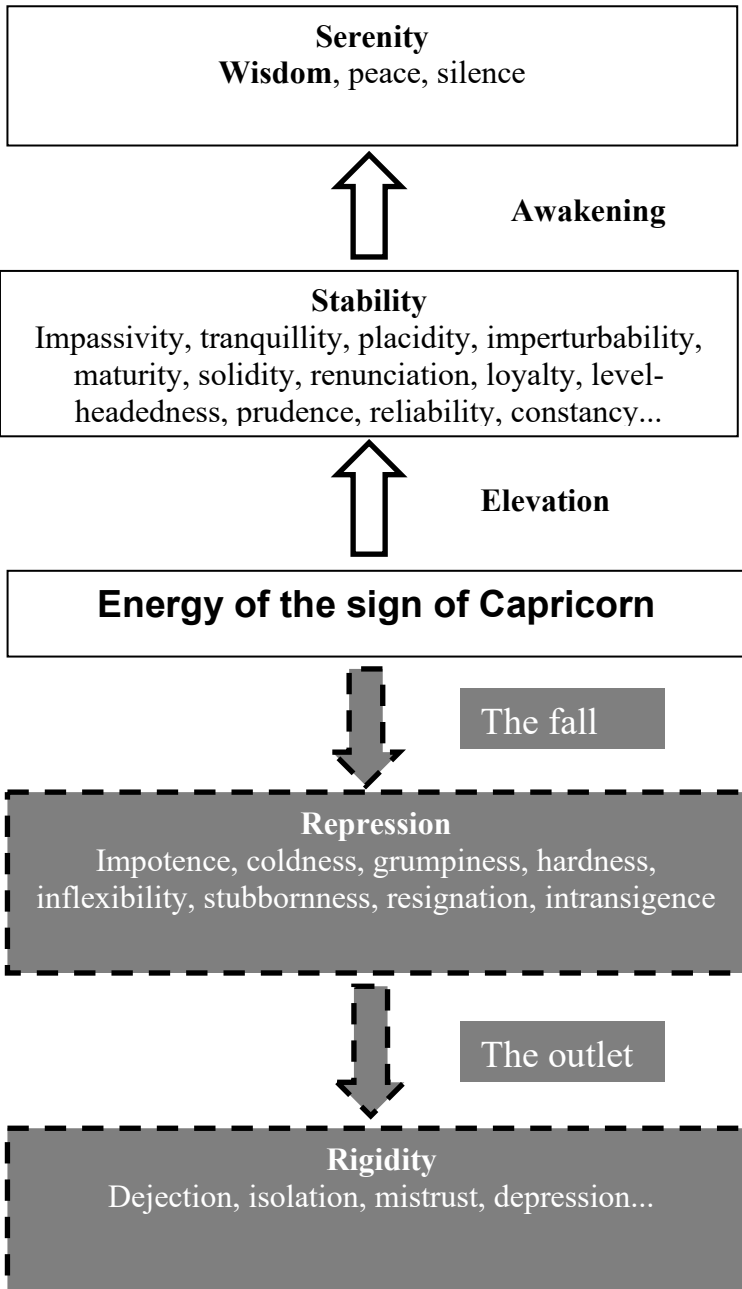
The sign of Capricorn, an earth sign, is associated with wisdom. However, as with all signs, there is also a

shadow side that can become predominant if the sign's energy is poorly channelled.

In the case of Capricorn, its luminous side is characterised by profound wisdom, serenity, quietude and silence resulting from its stability, maturity, solidity and prudence. These qualities enable Capricorn to navigate life successfully, making informed decisions and maintaining a healthy emotional balance.

However, if Capricorn's energy is diverted by the ego, this can lead to the fall of wisdom and the rise of rigidity. Some people born under this sign tend to confuse self-control with repression. Repression, repression, coldness, hardness, inflexibility and intransigence can then become dominant traits. The sign's original manifestation is diverted. This can lead to a number of depressing consequences, such as despondency, isolation, distrust and mistrust.

The fall or awakening of the sign of Capricorn



Here are a few tips to help you achieve wisdom:

-Meditation is a proven practice for developing wisdom and serenity. It helps to calm the mind.

-Cultivate a sense of gratitude for the things you have in your life.

-Try to learn more about the world around you and stay curious. Read books, attend conferences and engage in stimulating conversations with others.

-To achieve serenity, it's important to forge strong bonds with others and surround yourself with positive, inspiring people.

-Try to find a balance between your professional ambitions and time for relaxation and recuperation.

-Work on improving your empathy by actively listening to others and trying to put yourself in their shoes.

-Learn to recognise and accept your emotions, and work on expressing them in a healthy way.

-Recognise the strengths and successes of others.

-Try to adopt a more flexible and open attitude to new ideas and perspectives.

-Take time for yourself, to relax and recharge.

Moments of eternal wisdom and serenity

The peace of a monastery, the inner temple, silence, the wisdom of a hermit, spiritual asceticism, solitary meditation, the rejuvenation of a retreat, the quest to transcend, abandonment to the present, the transcendence of time, the revelation of eloquent silence, unfathomable inner peace, morning prayer, rediscovered peace, the wisdom of a hundred-year-old tree, the soothing of a lake, the peaceful horizon, a silent chant, the depth of a starry night, the whisper of the desert, the serenity of a cave, the glow of a flickering flame, the echo of bells, the wisdom of the elders, the chanting of monks, monastic discipline, evening meditation, the embrace of the peaks, the silence of the heights, the serenity of eternal snows, the calm of a twilight, the serenity of a Japanese garden...

What moments of serenity have you experienced recently?

How can you incorporate renunciation, fidelity, moderation, prudence, reliability and constancy into your daily life?

Freedom, *flying free, embracing modernity*

To feel free is to experience a state of well-being and total autonomy where we are at one with ourselves and can act in accordance with our own choices, values and aspirations. Internal or external constraints, fears, regrets and compromises do not hinder our ability to be and act according to our true nature.

Philosophical perspectives on freedom

In his work *Ethics*, Baruch Spinoza sees freedom as the realisation of our essence and nature as rational beings. For him, true freedom consists in following the laws of nature and understanding the causes that determine us. Bliss lies in the knowledge and understanding of the universe, which allows us to achieve a form of autonomy and freedom.

Friedrich Nietzsche sees freedom as an ideal to be achieved through self-assertion and creativity. In his vision, bliss lies in the expression of the will to power, which represents our desire to explore and push back our limits. The truly free individual is one who overcomes social and moral constraints to create his or her own values and give meaning to life.

According to Jean-Paul Sartre, in his work *Being and Nothingness*, freedom is a fundamental aspect of the human condition. He maintains that each individual is radically free and responsible for his or her choices and actions. For Sartre, this absolute freedom can be both

liberating and distressing, as it confronts us with the inevitability of our personal responsibility. Happiness lies in the awareness of our freedom and the authenticity of our choices.

Simone de Beauvoir, in "The Second Sex" and other writings, examines freedom in relation to the status of women in society. She argues that freedom and happiness are closely linked to the recognition and emancipation of women. Freedom for individuals, and for women in particular, lies in the ability to determine and realise their own life projects, without being limited by social constraints and gender stereotypes.

Mystical perspectives on freedom

The Indian sage Ramana Maharshi taught that absolute freedom and bliss are found in the realisation of the Self, which is identical to Consciousness or Brahman. He guided spiritual seekers towards this realisation through the method of self-inquiry.⁵

The Indian spiritual philosopher Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj, in his book "I Am That", teaches that ultimate freedom and bliss are attained when we realise our true nature as pure consciousness, free from the limitations of the ego and the body.

⁵ Self-inquiry involves asking the question "Who am I?" and focusing intensely on the source of our own consciousness. Instead of focusing on thoughts, feelings, sensory experiences, or even our usual notion of ourselves, we direct our attention to the sense of being or presence that underlies all our experiences.

Poetic perspectives on freedom

The French poet Paul Éluard wrote a poem entitled "Freedom" which celebrates freedom as an absolute and a bliss.

In this poem, Éluard repeats the word "Freedom" at the end of each stanza, emphasising the importance and value of freedom. He evokes a universal freedom that transcends borders and differences between individuals.

The French poet Arthur Rimbaud wrote about the freedom of the spirit and liberation from social and moral constraints. In his poem "The Drunken Boat", he describes an experience of absolute freedom and abandonment to the forces of nature.

Freedom in mindfulness astrology

Freedom is a fundamental value for the sign of Aquarius, which is a fixed air sign ruled by Uranus, the planet of innovation and autonomy. When on its bright side, Aquarius seeks to express its freedom through open-mindedness, creativity and the quest for new and progressive ideas. They advocate their independence and aspire to a world where everyone is free to live according to their own convictions and aspirations.

The downfall of freedom and individualism

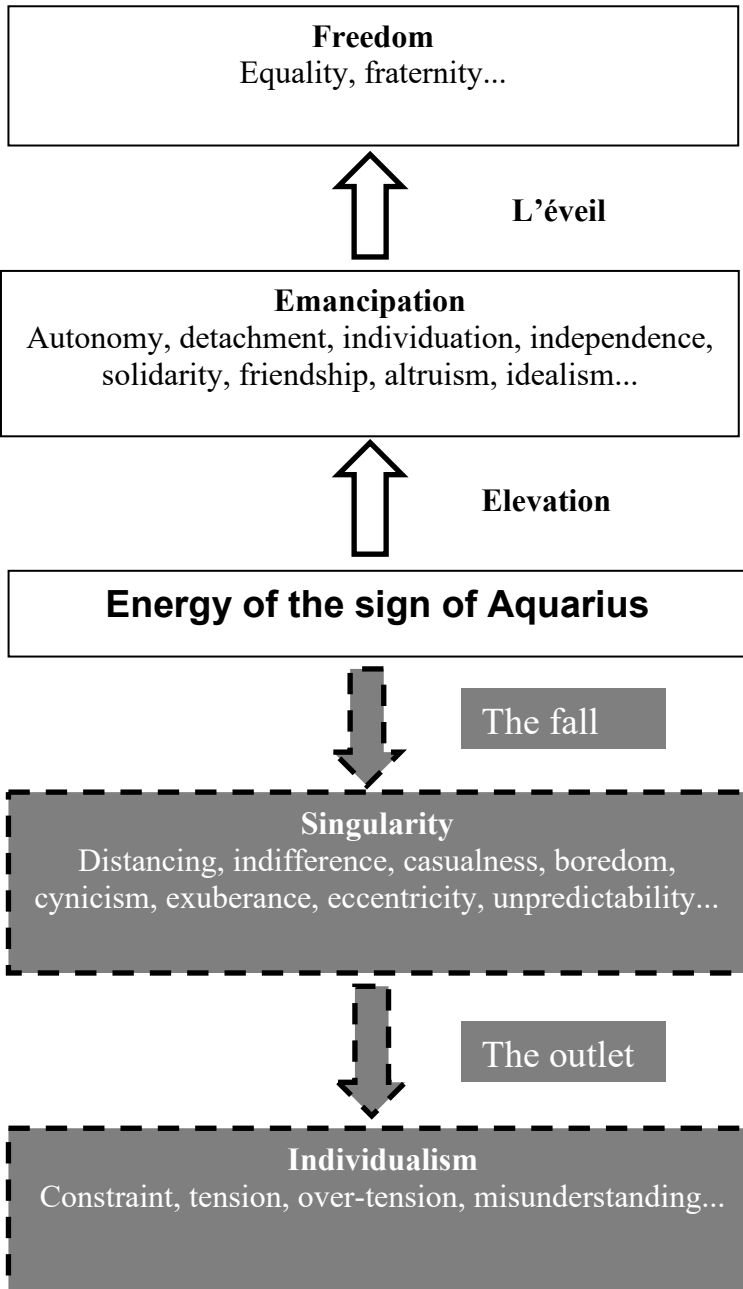
The sign of Aquarius is often associated with freedom, equality and fraternity, as well as values such as

emancipation, autonomy and detachment. These traits can be positive, as they encourage personal fulfilment, solidarity and altruism. Aquarians' idealism helps them seek solutions to improve the human condition and encourage cooperation.

However, every sign also has its shadow side, or less positive traits that can be exacerbated in certain circumstances. For Aquarius, these traits can include singularity, indifference, casualness, cynicism and eccentricity. These tendencies can give rise to an individualism which, when taken to extremes, can be a source of constraint, tension and misunderstanding for others. When Aquarian energy is diverted through the prism of the ego, it can be transformed into individualism. This means that the individual can begin to prioritise his or her own interests and desires over those of others, potentially damaging relationships and hindering cooperation and mutual understanding. In this case, the positive values of Aquarius can be overshadowed by more selfish and individualistic tendencies.

It is important for people born under the sign of Aquarius to maintain a balance between their need for freedom and independence and the need to integrate harmoniously into society and maintain deep, authentic interpersonal relationships.

The fall or awakening of the sign of Aquarius



Here are a few tips to help you feel freer in your life:

- Learn to accept yourself as you are, with your strengths and weaknesses. Don't let other people's expectations dictate your self-worth or your life choices.
- When your expectations are unrealistic, focus on the present and accept that some things are beyond your control.
- Try new activities, travel and meet new people to broaden your horizons and open yourself up to new perspectives.
- Make life choices based on your ideals.
- Manage your emotions without depending on others.
- Set yourself achievable goals.
- Creative expression can be liberating and help you feel more connected to yourself.
- Embrace your individuality and don't be afraid to show yourself as you are.
- Surround yourself with people who share your values and passions, and who encourage you to be free and independent.
- Remain open to new perspectives and be prepared to understand or challenge established norms.

-Practice introspection to better understand your emotions and thoughts, so as to gain greater clarity and clarity.

-Work on your emotional and financial autonomy to feel freer in all aspects of your life.

-Get involved in causes that are close to your heart and use your skills to contribute to a better world.

Eternal moments of freedom:

Emancipate yourself, become autonomous, detach yourself, become independent, turn the last page on your past, say goodbye to your hometown, break your emotional dependence, let go of past regrets, feel a sense of solidarity, free yourself, embrace friendship, fraternity, equality, altruism, explore other horizons, embracing diversity, uniting to progress, dancing freely, rediscovering beauty, feeding on hope, realising ideals, breaking chains, sharing new experiences, making unexpected discoveries, flying unhindered, unexpected friendships, revealing clarity, embracing modernity...

What moments of absolute freedom have you experienced recently?

How can you integrate autonomy, detachment, solidarity and friendship into your daily life?

Ecstasy, immensity, contemplation

Ecstasy is a state of happiness accompanied by a feeling of transcendence. It is a state of human experience often associated with mystical, religious or spiritual experiences.

There are various perspectives on ecstasy:

The mystical perspective: Mystical thinkers, such as Rumi, Saint Theresa of Avila or Master Eckhart, view ecstasy as a state of mystical union with the divine. For them, ecstasy is a means of transcending the limits of human life and communing with the divine nature of the universe. From this perspective, ecstasy is an ineffable and inexpressible experience that can only be understood by those who have lived it.

The ethical perspective: Ethical thinkers (Aristotle, Plotinus, Spinoza, etc.) consider ecstasy to be an experience linked to virtue and morality. For them, ecstasy is a state attained by those who have reached a high level of moral perfection and wisdom.

The psychological perspective: Ecstasy is seen as a state of human experience linked to the psyche and physiology. It is a state of trance or excitement that can be achieved through meditation or dance. From this perspective, ecstasy is a way of transcending the limits of ordinary consciousness and exploring different states of awareness.

The existentialist perspective: Existentialist thinkers such as Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre see ecstasy as a state of human freedom and authenticity. For them, ecstasy is a means of transcending the limits of everyday life and connecting with a deeper, truer reality. From this perspective, ecstasy is a means of asserting one's existence and freeing oneself from social and cultural constraints.

Ecstasy in mindfulness astrology

In mindfulness astrology, ecstasy is the source of well-being for the sign of Pisces. This sign is associated with personality traits such as kindness, empathy, humility, devotion and self-sacrifice. These qualities help to create ecstasy in a person born under this sign. For Pisceans, ecstasy can be a mystical experience, allowing them to feel part of something greater than themselves.

The fall of ecstasy into confusion (illusion...)

Ecstasy, as experienced by this sign in its luminous side, is an experience of union with the universe.

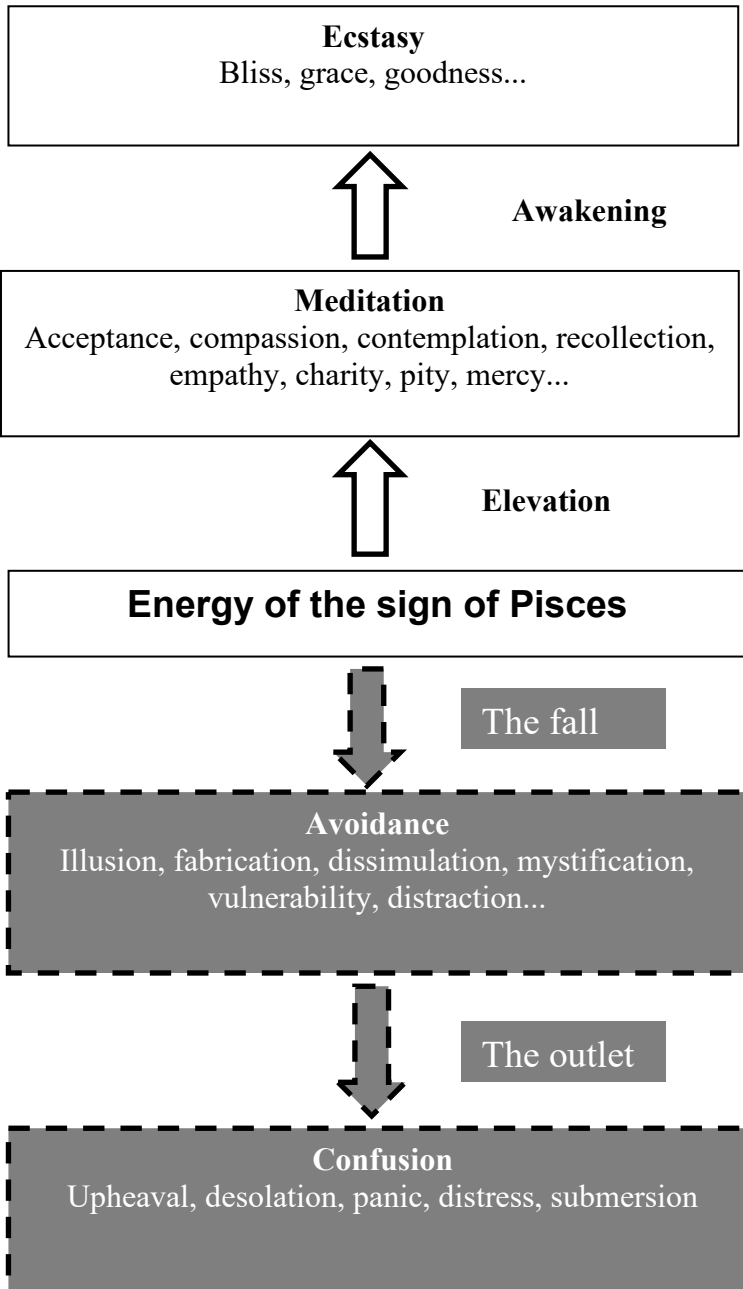
However, like all astrological signs, it also has a dark side. The negative qualities associated with the sign of Pisces include flight, fabrication, dissimulation and vulnerability. When people born under this sign are overwhelmed by these aspects of their personality, their energy is diverted through the prism of the ego and seeks an outlet in states of confusion, bewilderment or perplexity.

Ecstasy echoes a consciousness that is wider than our individual consciousness. It is an unspeakable opportunity to reconnect with consciousness. This involves acceptance, contemplation, meditation, empathy and gentleness. In this state of meditation, you discover a space of freedom and infinite love in the background of your individual consciousness. The challenge for Pisceans is to find a balance between their need to explore the mystical dimensions of existence and the need to remain anchored in reality. True ecstasy is not an escape, but an integration of spiritual experience.

To achieve this balance, it's crucial for Pisceans to deepen their spiritual practice and develop tools that help them discern authentic ecstasy from illusion. Meditation and sharing with others on the spiritual path are valuable ways of achieving this.

By engaging in this process of inner exploration and connection with Consciousness, Pisceans transcend the limits of their ego and discover the unconditional love that lies at the heart of ecstasy.

The fall or awakening of the sign of Pisces



To achieve this state, here are some tips and practices you can try:

-Try meditation techniques, such as transcendental meditation or mindfulness meditation.

-Spiritual practices such as prayer, chanting, dance or yoga can help create a sense of unity and connection with something greater than yourself.

-Gratitude can help cultivate a sense of happiness and well-being. Take a moment each day to reflect on what you are grateful for and express that gratitude.

-Aesthetic experiences, such as listening to music, observing art or contemplating natural beauty, evoke a sense of ecstasy and deep connection.

-Engaging in creative activities, such as writing, painting, music or dance, can help you express yourself and connect to a deeper source of energy, which can lead to moments of ecstasy.

-Sensual experiences, such as massage, caressing or intimate activities with a partner, promote an intense sense of pleasure.

-Try to concentrate fully on the present moment and appreciate the little things in life. This conscious presence can help you feel more connected and fulfilled.

-Certain physical activities, such as running, swimming or yoga.

-Spending time in nature, meditating by the water or connecting with the elements can help you experience moments of inner peace.

-Getting involved in voluntary activities or supporting causes close to your heart can give you a sense of fulfilment and ecstasy.

Here are a few interesting anecdotes about ecstasy:

-The Whirling Dervishes are members of the Mevlevi Sufi brotherhood, who practise a form of sacred dance called Semâ. During this dance, the dervishes spin in circles for hours on end, in a state of mystical ecstasy. The dance is considered a form of meditation and union with the divine.

-Saint Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan order, is famous for his love of nature and his ascetic lifestyle. He is also known to have had mystical experiences of ecstasy. According to legend, he even received the stigmata of crucifixion while meditating on Mount Verna in Italy.

-The experience of Kundalini: Kundalini is a spiritual energy believed to be located at the base of the spinal column, which can be awakened through spiritual practices such as yoga or meditation. When this energy is

awakened, it can provoke states of mystical ecstasy, visions and profound spiritual experiences.

-Shamans perform ecstatic rituals in many traditional cultures. These rituals can include dancing, singing, trances, visions and healing practices. Shamans use these practices to make contact with the spirit world, heal illnesses and obtain answers to important questions.

-Some people describe states of mystical ecstasy during sex, which can include feelings of oneness with their partner, visions, and a sense of transcendence.

-Some music, such as trance music, is specifically designed to induce states of ecstasy, using repetitive rhythms and hypnotic melodies.

-Here is a poem by René Daumal, entitled "The Great Game", which refers to mystical ecstasy and the spiritual quest:

With heart, mind, and voice,
I climb the mountain of Mystery.
Drunk with love, I dance on the edge,
Where the infinite sky touches the earth.

Like a madman possessed,
I join the Great Game of existence.
I seek the hidden key,
To unlock the door of the Divine.

In ecstasy, I soar through the veils,

Transcending the boundaries of self.
 I explore the realms unseen,
 Where spirit and matter intertwine.

In the realm of silence and stillness,
 I commune with the eternal flame.
 The seeker and the sought become one,
 In the sacred dance of the awakened soul.

Oh, the Great Game, the divine play,
 Where lovers and mystics unite.
 In the depths of the heart's secret chamber,
 The Beloved awaits, ever present.

Moments of eternity brought on by ecstasy:

The light of the rising sun, the infinite ocean, communion with the stars, contemplation of a sunset, a shower of shooting stars on the edge of the desert, a remote oasis of peace, the mystery of ephemeral mirages, the warm caressing wind, the infinite horizon, silence floating on the undulating dunes, contemplation of the waves, the song of distant whales, veils of ocean mist, the ballet of dolphins, spiralling galaxies, the Milky Way, contemplation in silence, resplendent inner peace, spiritual elegance...

What moments of ecstasy have you experienced recently?

How can you incorporate meditation, contemplation, recollection or empathy into your daily life?

The symphony of bliss

We have explored the twelve blissful states, each evoking a distinct facet of happiness. But how do they all manifest themselves together in our daily lives? How do these distinct shards of happiness intertwine to form a larger, more complete mosaic?

To find out, I invite you on a journey, a sensory and spiritual adventure, where we will see each bliss blossom and interact with the others. It's a sunny spring in the countryside, in a former priory, a simple setting full of opportunities and where nature generously dispenses its beauty.

As soon as you arrive, you notice two large gates that seem eternally open. You take a sloping path, which suddenly opens onto a magnificent stone building.

Around the building, lush green meadows and varied gardens offer a spectacle of colour. An arbour, an invitation to peace and quiet, stands nearby, while a swing evokes the carefree spirit of childhood. Hundred-year-old trees, silent witnesses to the passing of time, dot the landscape, amongst which stands out a cherry tree. The cherry tree is a veritable history book: for generations, children have secretly climbed its branches to gather cherries.

Old stone walls mark the boundaries of the estate. They accentuate the beauty of the neighbouring meadows and

surrounding hills. A path, flanked by two stone walls, runs alongside the property, a familiar route for children on their way to school. If you follow this path, it will lead you to the hill that stands proudly in the background of the building.

Spring is in full bloom and the lilacs are in bloom, their sweet, delicious fragrance wafting through the air. On the front of the house, a sundial shows the time: it's midday, and the crow of the cockerel signals your arrival. The smell of meadows in the sun catches you, a fresh, invigorating scent that awakens your senses. A large table set under the plane trees by the well, which is also more than a hundred years old, awaits you for a country-style meal.

It is here, in this place preserved from time, that we are going to spend a day. A day when every moment is a celebration of life, an invitation to joy. Get ready to experience this spring day in the countryside through the prism of the twelve blisses, to see how every moment can be a moment of happiness.

Amazement

As soon as you arrive, you'll be struck by the explosion of bright colours in the wild flowers and poppy-strewn meadows. Your gaze follows the graceful flight of a butterfly. As you explore the priory, you'll discover a secret garden at the far end of the estate, a hidden paradise where the first flowers of spring burst into a festival of colour. If you stay overnight, you'll be able to

watch the moon reflecting off the tranquil pond. The freshness of a waterfall hidden in the forest will leave you with a sense of amazement. In the morning, there was a short shower under clear skies. So when you arrived on the estate, the sky suddenly lit up with a rainbow. Added to this surprise was the sight of a kite dancing energetically in the wind in the middle of the countryside.

Voluptuous

As you cross the meadows, all your senses are stirred. You feel the caress of a rose petal on your skin, while the murmur of a nearby stream soothes your senses. You bask in the sun, savouring the warmth on your skin, then lie down for a nap in the shade of a tree, lulled by a breeze scented with meadow flowers. After a nap, you pick a plump cherry from a branch heavy with fruit, savouring the roundness of the ripe fruit.

Gaiety

The air is filled with the gaiety of a colourful farandole of children, laughing and running around you. You swing on a swing, laughing at the simple, childlike excitement. The graceful flight of a dragonfly, the aerial ballet of a butterfly and later the waltz of fireflies at dusk evoke a carefree joy.

Plenitude

You lie down again on the grass, listening to the birds singing and the leaves rustling. A sleeping kitten purrs beside you, adding to your sense of fulfilment and peace.

Splendour

Along the path, crystals set into the stones of the walls sparkle in the sunlight. And the rainbow always stretches majestically above you. The splendour of nature surrounds you, majestic trees, lush gardens, a sparkling waterfall with the solemnity of birdsong. As the sun sets, the sky blazes with hues of scarlet and gold.

Purity

In the shade of a lilac tree, a bead of dew glistens on a leaf, witness to the purity of the dawn. You drink the spring water from the well, fresh and pure. A field of wheat undulates in the breeze, and a cherry blossom discreetly invites your gaze.

Harmony

You share a smile with a passer-by walking along the shared path that runs alongside the estate. This simple gesture reflects universal harmony. You watch a swan glide gracefully across the nearby lake, an image of grace and balance. Later, the joy of a serenade will rise in the evening air, the notes blending in perfect harmony. The

rosy twilight will paint the sky and the gentle swaying of the trees in the breeze will bring a sense of harmony.

Deliverance

In this peaceful place, far from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, you feel a sense of liberation, a deliverance. It's a spiritual rebirth, a truth revealed. It's like a metamorphosis, a spiritual awakening that frees you from your worries.

Exultation

In the late afternoon, you'll join in a feast in the village square, a celebration of new-found friendships and shared victories. A triumphant crescendo rises from the lively brass band, and you dance in a fiery folk ball, sharing in the collective exultation. Songs are sung together, their resonance filling the air with infectious joy.

Wisdom, serenity

After climbing the hill that overlooks the hamlet, you sit silently under a hundred-year-old tree, listening to the distant echo of the village bells. The silence is eloquent, full of wisdom. It's a serenity that resonates with the silent song of nature, a revelation of profound calm.

Freedom

Then you dance freely in a clearing, nourished by hopes and new shared experiences. It's an unexpected discovery, a revelatory clarity that makes you feel like you're flying free. At the crossroads of freedom, unexpected friendships are born, bringing a sense of brotherhood.

Ecstasy

As the sun sets, you lie down on the grass one last time, waiting for the night to come. Contemplating the sky plunges you into a state of ecstasy. The spiralling galaxies in the night sky remind you of the vastness of the universe. You feel a deep connection with the universe, a unity with the Milky Way stretching above you. As you lose yourself in the contemplation of the starry sky, you realise that you are part of something far greater, far more vast than you have ever imagined.

Every sensation, every emotion you've felt throughout the day has brought you closer to the essential truth of existence. Happiness is not a destination, it's a journey, a process of awakening to the richness and depth of each moment.

The fable in this story is an invitation to full awareness and appreciation of the present moment. It reminds us that happiness is not a final destination, but rather a series of present moments lived with gratitude.

It is important to note that this 'symphony of bliss' does not exclude suffering, conflict or the difficulties of life. Indeed, even in the most difficult moments, there are always opportunities to find comfort and well-being in the simple things of life.

However, in these moments of pain or turmoil, we are often less receptive to these moments of happiness. Our minds are preoccupied with our problems and worries, and it can be difficult to open up to the beauty and wonder around us.

But that doesn't mean that these moments of well-being don't exist during these difficult times. On the contrary, they are there, patiently waiting for us to notice them.

So it's essential not to let our problems and worries overwhelm us, but to keep an open mind and be receptive to these moments of well-being.

It's worth pointing out that the reason I've chosen to focus on these moments of bliss rather than their downfall is partly because of the general tendency to concentrate on the negative aspects of life. You only have to open a newspaper or look at the news to see that bad news and tragic stories often dominate the headlines.

But life is not just about drama and hardship. There's also a lot of beauty, happiness and moments of well-being to celebrate. That's why I've chosen to focus on these moments of happiness and well-being, not to ignore or minimise life's difficulties, but to remind people that

these positive moments also exist, and that they deserve to be recognised and appreciated.

Ultimately, it's a question of balance. If we only recognise the difficulties and trials of life, we risk missing out on all the happiness and beauty that are also there. That's why it's so important to celebrate those moments of bliss when they come, even in the midst of challenges and difficulties.

Meditative interlude: Meditation on gratitude and happiness

After exploring the 12 blisses and how they manifest in our lives, this meditative interlude offers a guided meditation on gratitude for these experiences of happiness and joy.

Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit or lie down. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, focusing your attention on the breath.

Think of a few recent moments when you have felt one of the 12 blisses in your life. It could be a moment of fulfilment, freedom, amazement or delight.

Choose one or two that seem particularly significant.

Visualise these moments in detail, recalling the emotions, sensations and thoughts you experienced. Try to immerse yourself in these experiences of happiness and joy.

Now cultivate a feeling of gratitude for these experiences. You can mentally repeat a phrase such as "I am grateful for this blissful experience" or simply feel the gratitude in your heart.

Take a moment to feel this gratitude and let the positive emotions associated with these blissful experiences spread throughout your being.

When you feel ready, gently bring your attention back to your breathing and take a few deep breaths to refocus.

Open your eyes and take a moment to integrate this meditation before reading on.

The scientific and psychological aspects of mindfulness

Over the last few decades, research in psychology and neuroscience has shed light on the mechanisms underlying mindfulness and happiness. In this chapter, we will examine the scientific evidence supporting the idea that practising mindfulness can improve our emotional well-being and life satisfaction.

Mindfulness and the brain

Neuroscience studies have shown that regular practice of mindfulness meditation can lead to structural and functional changes in the brain. For example, research has shown that meditation can increase grey matter density in certain brain regions involved in emotion regulation, decision-making and empathy. In addition, brain imaging studies have shown that mindfulness meditation can reduce activity in a region of the brain associated with rumination and mind wandering when we are in a state of mental rest.

Mindfulness and emotional well-being

Several studies have shown that practising mindfulness can help improve emotional well-being. Mindfulness has been associated with a reduction in stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms. In addition, mindfulness can help cultivate positive emotions such as gratitude, compassion and joy.

Mindfulness and life satisfaction

The practice of mindfulness can also contribute to greater life satisfaction. By cultivating presence and attention to the present moment, individuals develop a greater appreciation of everyday experiences and interpersonal relationships. Research suggests that mindfulness can help strengthen social bonds, increase resilience in the face of life's challenges and improve overall quality of life.

Mindfulness and the pursuit of happiness

Ultimately, mindfulness can be a valuable tool for those seeking to develop a deeper understanding of themselves and find meaning and lasting happiness. By cultivating mindful presence, individuals learn to recognise and overcome the obstacles that prevent them from realising their true potential and living a fulfilling life.

In conclusion, scientific and psychological research supports the idea that mindfulness can have a positive impact on our emotional well-being and life satisfaction. By integrating mindfulness into our pursuit of happiness, we can develop a deeper understanding of ourselves and our place in the universe, enabling us to live more fulfilling and authentic lives.

As we continue to explore and deepen our practice of mindfulness, we can gradually uncover the layers of conditioning and mental habits that keep us in patterns of suffering. As we develop a clearer awareness of our mind

and body, we are better able to recognise and cultivate the luminous qualities of our psyche.

Happiness in Social Life

Happiness, a fundamental and universal human aspiration, plays a key role in social cohesion.

We will demonstrate that happiness is a universal aspiration shared by human beings.

Global surveys, such as the World Values Survey and the World Happiness Report, show that happiness is an aspiration shared by people from diverse cultural and national backgrounds. Researchers have also identified universal factors that contribute to happiness, such as interpersonal relationships, health, freedom and personal fulfilment.

Cultural expressions such as music, literature and art also bear witness to the universal aspiration to happiness. Love stories, heroic quests and tales of triumph over adversity illustrate the importance of happiness and fulfilment in human life. Celebrations and rituals, such as weddings, birthdays and festivals, also reflect the desire for shared joy.

Happiness is very important in social life, as it plays an essential role in interpersonal relationships and the quality of life of individuals. Happy people are more likely to have positive social relationships, make new friends and maintain lasting relationships with those around them.

Happiness also has a positive impact on psychological and physical health. Happy people are more at ease with

stress, have better self-esteem and are less prone to depression and anxiety. They also tend to take care of their physical health, eat a balanced diet and exercise regularly.

Examples of government organisations concerned with happiness

-Bhutan introduced the GNH in 1972 as an alternative to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which measures a country's economic growth. GNH takes into account factors such as the preservation of the environment, the promotion of culture and traditional values, responsible governance and the reduction of inequalities. This holistic approach aims to foster sustainable and balanced economic development while preserving the well-being and quality of life of its citizens.

-United Arab Emirates (UAE): In 2016, the UAE launched a national programme for happiness and well-being.

-New Zealand: In 2019, New Zealand presented a "well-being budget" focusing on the quality of life and prosperity of its citizens rather than on economic growth.

-Finland: Finland is often ranked as one of the happiest countries in the world according to the World Happiness Report. The country focuses on education, health and social well-being to promote a high quality of life for all its citizens.

-Denmark: Denmark also ranks highly. Danish policies focus on a healthy work-life balance, social security and gender equality.

-The United Kingdom: In 2015, Bristol became the first British city to elect a "Minister for Happiness" responsible for promoting the well-being of the local population. The city has launched a range of initiatives to improve the quality of life for its citizens, including public art programmes, green spaces and community events.

Government initiatives focused on happiness

Efforts to integrate happiness and well-being into public life are increasingly recognised as an essential component of sustainable development and quality of life. There are a number of areas where happiness and well-being are being considered and encouraged.

Here are a few examples:

-Education: Mindfulness and stress management programmes are increasingly common in schools.

-Urban planning: Urban planners and architects are incorporating the creation of green spaces, the encouragement of walking and cycling, and the design of welcoming and accessible neighbourhoods into their projects.

-Public health: Public health programmes aim to promote psychological and emotional well-being as a complement to physical health.

-Work: Some governments encourage flexible working and a positive working environment.

-Environment: Environmental policies aim to protect nature and combat climate change. A healthy environment is essential for people's quality of life and health.

-Arts and culture: Spaces are offered to citizens for creative expression, discovery and exchange. Cultural events and public art spaces promote social cohesion and community cohesion.

Happiness research in positive psychology

Research in positive psychology and sociology has studied the factors influencing happiness, such as genetics, the environment, social relationships and physical and mental health. Cultural norms, values and expectations impact on the perception of individual happiness. Interventions to improve well-being include cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness meditation and socio-emotional education programmes. Practices such as gratitude, meditation, physical exercise and engagement in meaningful activities improve long-term well-being. Sociological studies have analysed trends and differences between social groups, cultures and countries, and examined the impact of various specific contexts on

happiness, reinforcing the idea of a universal aspiration to happiness shared by all human beings.

Major impacts of these studies and research

These studies have helped to raise public and decision-maker awareness of the importance of well-being and life satisfaction. They have also helped to identify the key factors that influence happiness, as well as cultural and national differences in the perception and experience of happiness. They have influenced policy-making in many countries and encouraged the development of initiatives focused on well-being. For example, the World Happiness Report has led some governments to adopt policies that focus on the well-being of their citizens rather than on economic growth alone. This research has also led to the development of intervention programmes to improve the well-being of individuals and communities. These programmes can include personal development workshops, mental health initiatives, meditation and mindfulness courses, and campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of happiness and well-being.

Studies on well-being at work have led to significant changes in management practices and working conditions.

This research has also encouraged schools to create positive school environments, focusing on social support and the promotion of a healthy and respectful school climate.

Does money make people happy?

A number of studies have examined the impact of money, success and material possessions on long-term happiness.

Brickman's study showed that lottery winners were not significantly happier after receiving their lottery winnings. The Diener and Seligman study found that the richest people were not necessarily happier than the general population. The study by Kasser and Ryan shows that individuals who attach great importance to material possessions and financial success tend to have a poorer quality of life than those who focus on interpersonal relationships and personal development.

Conclusion

Mindfulness offers us a pathway to transcend the emotional and spiritual challenges associated with the Fall and bring us closer to our universal quest for happiness. The twelve felicities associated with our psyches remind us that each individual has unique qualities and deep aspirations which, when fully realised, help us to lead a more fulfilling and authentic life.

Mindfulness enables us to reconnect with our true nature, helping us to observe and accept our thoughts and emotions without judgement. By practising mindfulness regularly, we cultivate a conscious presence that guides us towards inner balance and harmony, while strengthening our relationship with ourselves and others.

It's essential to remember that the path to self-realisation is a continuous and evolving process. As we progress along this path, we can overcome the challenges associated with the loss of initial harmony (the Fall) and realise our potential as fully awakened and fulfilled human beings.

I invite you to continue your exploration of mindfulness practices and to cultivate your quest for authentic happiness.

Mindfulness is a natural corrective to stressful tendencies and behaviours that separate us from our true nature. By practising mindfulness, we are able to observe our thoughts, emotions and actions without judgement. This allows us to become aware of the process of separation caused by the illusion of an ego and to return to our luminous and benevolent essence.

By developing this conscious presence, we can recognise the moments when the luminous sides of our character seem to fall into the shadows and develop the self-awareness to stand up straight and awaken. Mindfulness helps us to be more in tune with ourselves, to understand our motivations and to cultivate healthier relationships with others.

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Glossary

Affirmations: Positive, encouraging statements that we repeat to ourselves to boost self-confidence, self-esteem and the achievement of our goals.

Mindfulness: An approach to mindfulness that involves observing our thoughts, emotions and sensations without judgement or criticism.

Authenticity: Being sincere and true to yourself and others, living in accordance with your values and inner truth.

Self-compassion: Kindness and acceptance towards oneself, especially in times of difficulty or failure.

Autosuggestion: The practice of giving yourself positive suggestions to influence your thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

Self-regulation: The ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts and behaviour in an adaptive and healthy way.

Fall: In this context, the separation from our true nature, which is seen as an obstacle on our spiritual path.

Compassion: The ability to feel sympathy for the suffering of others and to want to do something to alleviate it.

Non-violent communication: A method of communication that aims to resolve conflict and improve relationships by expressing feelings and needs in an empathetic and respectful way.

Consciousness (with a capital C) or Universal Consciousness: fundamental and ultimate reality. Essence of all that exists. Substrate of all experience. It is non-dual, limitless and formless. It is our true nature.

Self-awareness: The ability to recognise and understand one's own emotions, thoughts, motivations and behaviour.

Personal development: The process of inner growth and change that can occur through the practice of mindfulness and other personal development techniques.

Detachment: The ability to free oneself from emotional attachments and expectations that can cause suffering.

Dualism: The philosophical view that mind and body, or consciousness and matter, are two distinct but interconnected entities.

Empathy: The ability to understand and share the emotions and experiences of others.

Equanimity: A calm and balanced state of mind in the face of life's challenges and changes.

Awakening: The realisation of the true nature of reality and of oneself.

Bliss: States of well-being and joy that can be cultivated through the practice of mindfulness and other techniques.

Gratitude: The recognition and appreciation of the positive things in life.

Impermanence: The notion that everything in life is constantly changing and that nothing lasts forever.

Emotional intelligence: The ability to recognise, understand and manage our own emotions and those of others.

Interdependence: The understanding that everything is linked and depends on each other to exist.

Intuition: The ability to understand or perceive something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning.

Introspection: The examination of one's own thoughts, feelings and motivations.

Letting go: The process of releasing emotional attachments and expectations that can cause stress or suffering.

Meditation: A mental practice that aims to cultivate mindfulness, concentration, equanimity and other beneficial mental qualities.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR): A mindfulness-based stress reduction programme developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, which teaches meditation and mindfulness techniques to manage stress and improve quality of life.

Mindset: The beliefs and attitudes that shape the way we perceive and interact with the world.

Nirvana: The state of ultimate liberation from suffering and ignorance, achieved through the realisation of ultimate truth.

Non-duality: The notion that reality is indivisible and that the concepts of separation and duality are illusory.

Non-judgement: An attitude of neutral and open observation, without passing judgement on experiences or people.

Full awareness: Being attentive and present in every moment, without judgement.

Presence: The state of being fully engaged and aware of present experience, without being distracted by thoughts or concerns about the past or future.

Psyche: A term encompassing the conscious and unconscious mental processes of an individual, including emotions, thoughts and perceptions. Studied by psychology, psychiatry and philosophy of mind.

Resilience: The ability to recover and adapt in the face of adversity, stress and life's challenges.

Samsara: The cycle of birth, death and rebirth, characterised by suffering and dissatisfaction.

Spirituality: The connection with something greater than oneself, often linked to the search for meaning and purpose in life.

Synchronicity: The significant coincidence of events or circumstances that seem to be linked in some mysterious or inexplicable way.

Personal transformation: The process of inner growth and change that can occur through the practice of mindfulness and other personal development techniques.

Transcendence: The ability to go beyond the limits of ordinary experience to reach a higher state of consciousness.

Visualisation: The practice of creating mental images to facilitate relaxation, healing or the achievement of goals.

Essay

The twelve states of bliss

witnesses of consciousness

This book explores the intimate link between mindfulness and the universal quest for happiness. Another aim of this essay is to help the reader understand how the concept of the Fall as a loss of initial harmony or separation from our true nature, present in many spiritual traditions, is linked to our ceaseless quest for happiness and fulfilment. This book also refers to the 12 signs of the zodiac, suggesting a connection between these astrological signs and the '12 blisses'. By exploring the astrological signs and their luminous qualities in synchronicity with the fundamental blisses, the author reveals how self-knowledge through astrology, mindfulness and self-care can serve as a natural corrective to overcome obstacles and return to our true essence.