

# Mercury Retrograde

by Alice Inoue

Normally all planets move forward in orbit, but three times a year Mercury goes “retrograde” which means “moving back”. It is a time when, to an observer on Earth, Mercury appears to stop in its orbital track, back up for awhile, and then slowly move forward again. The time when it stops and moves back is called “Mercury Retrograde”.

All planets in the solar system go through retrograde periods, but because Mercury is the planet that rules the way we communicate, it is a time when communication often breaks down.

Wires get crossed, plans are suddenly changed, messages lost, your cell phone dies in the middle of a call, a package never arrives, we get into petty bickering with others, the fax breaks, the e-mail never arrives, the internet connection is slower than usual, you set your alarm but it goes off at the wrong time, appt. times get mixed up, you’re late to an appointment even though you left early . . . it’s a time where you may feel that you just can’t get on the right wavelength. Trouble seems to multiply, travel plans go wrong, couples split, accident and sickness rates go up. You may feel it’s happening only to you but in fact it’s happening to everyone.

You may wonder why people are suddenly realizing the impact of Mercury Retrograde. Well, if you think about it, never before in the history of humanity has there been so much communication. Computers, the web, e-mail, cell phones, Fed Ex, faxes, beepers . . . the more you rely on your communication networks, the more vulnerable you become to the inevitable disruptions. These disruptions affect every aspect of our lives.

## MERCURY RETROGRADE IS A GREAT TIME TO:

- Review your life and the decisions you’ve made.
- Readjust your priorities.
- Retreat to give yourself the space you need.
- Recommit to the goals you believe are worthwhile.
- Reflect on who you are and where you’re going.
- Recharge your batteries.
- Repair any damage you may have caused to objects or relationships.
- Renew your sense of purpose.
- Revise your attitudes and routines.
- Return to your core set of values.
- Reward yourself for success.

Here are two quick stories from the pages of history. The Titanic sank on April 15, 1912 – right during the peak of MR (Mercury Retrograde). Officers on board ignored not one but six warnings that icebergs were in the vicinity. Another liner, The Californian, was less than 20 miles away but its radio operator had gone off duty and so never received Titanic's SOS signals.

Another retrograde period ended on November 7, 2000, the day of the presidential election between Bush and Gore. Mercury shifted out of retrograde at about 9pm, just after the TV news stations wrongly predicted that Gore would win in Florida. For more than a month afterward, the breakdown in voting systems created chaos and court battles. This serves as a warning: Mercury is retrograde for only a little while, but MR effects can last past that.

Most recently, April 8, 2005, Prince Charles' wedding date had to be changed because the Pope's funeral was scheduled for the same day. He spent his supposed wedding day attending a funeral – talk about a change in plans.

Does this mean that we have no choice and must suffer communication breakdown for three weeks three times a year?? Absolutely not. By knowing what MR means and when it will occur, you can protect yourself from many of its effects.

Mercury's pattern shows us that, as in nature, there's wisdom in slowing down every so often, taking a few steps back and reconsidering how - and when - to move forward again. The re in retrograde reminds us that MR is a good time to review, revisit, rethink and reboot! *Alice*

## MERCURY RETROGRADE ADVICE

During MR, electronic gadgets are especially prone to disaster. If possible, resist buying anything involving communications technology during this time.

Never sign contracts during MR. Don't sign up for cell phone service, health club memberships, car leases or insurance policies. Don't even think about buying a house. If you must, triple check everything. Try to delay putting your name on any document until after MR is over.

Never make a major purchase, especially a car during MR. Even if things seem fine at the time, there's a good chance a defect will appear during a later retrograde.

Recheck your work and always double-check your messages. Hesitate to press the SEND button on your e-mails until you read them over.

Write down information when playing back voice messages – don't rely on your memory.

Leave early to all appointments when possible and don't be surprised if you arrive late.

## MERCURY RETROGRADE DATES:

- March 30–April 24, 2011
- August 2–August 26, 2011
- November 24–December 13, 2011