

I was a Goth in the 90s: Thursday's Child

Wednesday's child is full of woe,

Thursday's child has far to go.

You might have had a unit in school that explored the names of the days of the week in English and where they come from. I want to say I got this in third grade, but I wouldn't put money on that.

On the chance you didn't know, the days in the week are named for the Sun, the Moon, then the Norse gods Tyr, Odin, Thor, Freya, and either the giant Surtur or the planet/Roman titan Saturn. I've heard it both ways for Saturday.

I must back up here, just a little: I was a goth in the 90s. What that means here is that I absorbed a lot of folkloric, occult, and let's not mince words, witchy lore and knowledge in the dim long ago of the End of History. Now, I want to share some of it with you.

Corporate astrology.

We know it when we see it. Usually because right after seeing it, we're looking at our upper orbital bones as our eyes roll. Human Resources or a manager with a salt lamp on their desk may send it your way; mindfulness, visualization, some online quiz to sort you into a category. Meyers-Briggs has a pernicious tenacity rivaled only by herpes simplex.

At best, they are harmless little mood-lighteners. Usually, they're a little distracting and possibly irritating. All of them promote some form and degree of magical thinking, which can be very dangerous when left unaddressed, create incoherent plans, and lead to bad outcomes.

Magical thinking is also a very human response to uncertainty. We use it to help manage our anxiety over circumstances beyond our control. We can also use it to help organize our thoughts, understand our needs and intentions, and choose the responses that will help shape the outcomes we can control. The one weird trick in this case is to remember that it is magical thinking, recognize its limitations, and be willing to use it only for what it's good for.

Anxious times bring magical thinking.

[I'm not going to argue that these are anxious times.](#) I have, however, seen the usual crop of articles appearing over and over, ones mentioning manifesting, visualization, change your mindset, change your world. They are like weeds, waiting for the right conditions to grow and spread, and they offend me.

Why? The more important question is how they offend me. The answer is a long story for another time.

For now, I will say that one thing you learn from pursuing witchy lore is that some plants you think are weeds are actually super useful when identified and used with appropriate care.

The days of the week, and how they work (for me).

This method is something that I have used for a while now, but never codified until this round of raising the green banner. I've been round this horn often enough to know that what they tell you about creating your own schedule when there is not one imposed by work is 100% true to my experience.

Each day of the week has a mission informed by the folkloric importance of the day. The mission is not the only thing I have to do, and I don't exclude tasks that don't correspond to the mission. The mission is a goal I want to accomplish at some time during that day.

I've made a little rhyme for it, based on an old English fortune-telling rhyme, and it goes a little like this:

*Monday's child surveys the road,
Tuesday's child swallows the toad.
Wednesday's child gets flies with honey,
Thursday's child will get that money.
Friday's child checks in with friends,
Saturday's child puts things to bed.
And when at last the week has passed, Sunday's child will go and touch some grass.*

Yes, I am an award-winning poet. Why do you ask?

Monday – the Moon – survey the road.

Monday is not my least favorite day of the week. I hate that the weekend is over, yes, but the day itself is not my enemy. Monday is named for the moon and the moon traditionally brings vision and intuition.

My mission for Monday is to use my intuition and observe what needs to be done this week, then make the plan to accomplish all those tasks. This includes what tasks I want to concentrate on for which working day. I find this works best for me first thing, right after reading all the emails that came in over the weekend.

Tuesday – Tyr and the planet Mars – swallow the toad.

This is it: my least favorite day. Tuesday is where I have traditionally found out what has gone wrong, had miserable meetings, dealt with the hardest tasks. Tuesday is named for Tyr, a pugnacious god from a pugnacious mythology, who put his hand in a wolf's mouth and got it bitten off so that the wolf could be bound and not cause further harm. Tuesday maps to Mars, a planet associated with conflict.

My mission for Tuesday is to [swallow the toad](#). I try to focus on the things I don't want to do and troubleshooting problems. I linked to Roger Alderson's excellent article to explain why I chose to not do this on Monday. I'll add that since I know I hate Tuesdays most of any workday, I figure that I may as well just embrace it.

Wednesday – Odin and the planet Mercury – get flies with honey.

Wednesday is named for Odin and associated with the planet Mercury, you know, the one always in retrograde. Odin is a traveler and trickster and always shows up when the situation is about to change.

Wednesday has three missions: The first is to reach out, to send emails, schedule meetings with subject matter experts. Mercury handles communication in astrology and Wednesday is far enough from either end of the week to help make it easier for folks to get back to me.

The second mission is to check in on the course I have plotted through the week and determine if I need to adjust.

The third mission is to try and learn something new. It is usually a small thing, but a little sense of accomplishment can go a long way as I head for the home stretch of the week.

Thursday – Thor and the planet Jupiter – get that money.

Thor is a boisterous sort of deity. Jupiter is a planet that governs prosperity. I'm writing the first draft of this article on a Thursday because I want it to get attention that will lead to further opportunities, thus the title.

Thursday has different possibilities for its mission, depending on Monday planning and Wednesday course-correction. All of them have something to do with a very flexible interpretation of money that includes anything that improves my time or efforts or makes my life easier. These include:

1. Knocking out easy, mundane tasks.
2. Making freshness checks and revisions on completed tasks.
3. Progressing with anything that is important but not urgent and on long-term projects.
4. Experimentation with new tools and methods that might make my job easier or my work better.
5. Swallowing successive toads.

Friday – Freya and the planet Venus – check in with friends.

Named for Freya, a goddess of fertility and love, associated with Venus, you'd think that it probably shouldn't have much to do with the workplace. Though folklore says love and implies romantic relationships, the day applies to all relationships, and my mission for the day is to maintain and strengthen those bonds.

On Friday, I reach out, but unlike Wednesday, this is not to ask for something. Friday is for vibe checks. On Friday I might check in on a team member who had a rough time this week, someone who I suspect is waiting on something from me, or with a colleague I haven't spoken to in a while.

My strategy is simply to reach out, offer support, and invite the other person to continue the conversation or not as they choose. If they do, I let them lead and practice my active listening. I've found this mission more important as work becomes more remote.

Saturday – Surtur or the Planet Saturn – put things to bed.

Saturn is a planet associated with endings. Surtur, the king of the fire giants, is associated with the end of the world in Norse mythology. For me, Saturday is about setting and maintaining boundaries. In this case, the boundary between my work and the rest of my life. My goal on Saturday is to put a definitive end to my week, and to not think about work to the best of my ability. Simple as that.

Sunday – Go touch some grass.

Most important mission of the week. Get outside. Get with friends. Do something you want to do. Monday always comes.