

Grandson doesn't like affection

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: When is it OK for a child not to want to be touched by anyone, including his parents? My 10-year-old grandson doesn't want to hug anyone, nor does he like people putting their hands on his back, shoulder or head. Should this just be accepted?

Should we use behavior modification so he will let us be affectionate, or are we just supposed to respect his wishes on this? If I put my arm on his shoulder, he will move away. If my wife pats him on the arm, he flinches. When he tells his parents that he doesn't like being touched, they either laugh or get angry. What do you say? — *Miffed*

Dear Miffed: Please do not try to force a child to be physically affectionate if he does not wish to be touched. There could be many reasons for this. Is this a recent development? Has the child been touched inappropriately by anyone? Is the child autistic? Is his skin sensitive and the touching too painful or irritating? And some children that age become extremely embarrassed by any public displays of affection, especially from family members.

Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



The parents should neither laugh nor get angry. They should speak to the child's pediatrician and ask for guidance. There could be a serious reason (earlier molestation) or something as simple as needing to be tolerant and respectful of this stage of his development. As we hope you will be.

Dear Annie: A friend is getting married soon and the invitation states that it is going to be a potluck reception. I have never heard of such a thing for a wedding. Is this new? I have always believed that the bride and groom should have the wedding they can afford and not ask the guests to bring food to the reception. Also, I found out that she is having the bridesmaids help set up and clean after.

I understand the bride and

groom don't have a lot of money, but come on! She also had put a lot of pricey items on her bridal registry and when I spoke to her later, she told me she was upset that she only received half the stuff she wanted and they were mostly the less-expensive items.

What is your take on all this? Should someone say something to her about her being so cheap? She already knows that most of her family doesn't like the man she is marrying. — *Friend's Wedding*

Dear Friend: In some cultures and areas of the country, potluck weddings are perfectly fine. In those places, the entire community comes together to prepare the wedding celebration. It isn't a demand on an invitation. It is simply how things are done. Unfortunately, this doesn't sound like the case with your friend.

Some folks won't mind the request and will be happy to show off their cooking skills. And we are certain that some guests will prepare and bring a lovely dish and consider it their wedding gift. Your obligation is simply to respond "yes" or "no" to the invitation."

ARIES (March 21-April 19). There are times when genuine outrage is warranted, but those times are few and far between. Mostly, there's no good reason to get riled up. Keep your cool, and everyone around you will, too.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). For those planning a trip, ignore the rule about houseguests and fish at your own peril. No matter how charming and loved you are, anything still lingering after three days starts to smell.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Some people believe other people's lifestyles are somehow an affront to their own. It makes no sense to you — you're a live-and-let-live sort. Let them argue it out while you're busy making money today.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Usually when you reach the point of being irritated with absolutely everyone in the world, the one you're really mad at is you. Your issue with yourself? You haven't given yourself the much-needed break you deserve.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Too many ingredients spoil the soup — or the project, relationship, schedule, etc. Stick to the recipe. Great patience and restraint will be required for exemplary results.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Certain friends bring out your quick humor, and others make you feel like you're always dodging conversational quicksand. Why put yourself in uncomfortable situations? Choose your company carefully.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). As for that group of hotheads you have to operate in, sometimes you wonder how you landed in an environment so rich in narcissism and delusion. Your main goal will be not to

become like them.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Before you invent a new way to get to the goal, give the old one a try. If it works, it will save you unnecessary effort. Your brain is best put to work on a problem that hasn't been solved by anyone yet.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Manipulation is when you trick someone into wanting what you'd like them to want. It leads to nothing good. You want to influence others to be their best, but they have to want that, too.

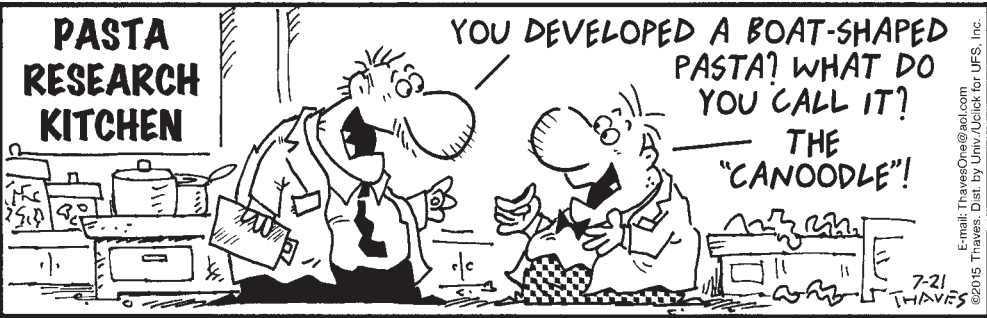
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). This is a day when your body knows more than you do about what it needs. Listen to the muscles and appetites that live in you. Trust your physical instinct.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll have some explaining to do, not because your actions are so outside the norm, but because you'll be dealing with people who simply don't get what's going on.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Today, the most effective solution will be so obvious that it's easy to miss. That's why the opinions of inexperienced people will be so valuable to you. The very young and the very old will be especially lucky to have on your side.

WEDNESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 22). You'll start your new year finishing old business. As you revisit and revive projects, you'll find that you have the experience, skills and judgment that were missing before. Big money months are August, November and February. A personal dream becomes real as you carry your intention all the way through the finish line. Aries and Sagittarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 29, 22, 19 and 17.

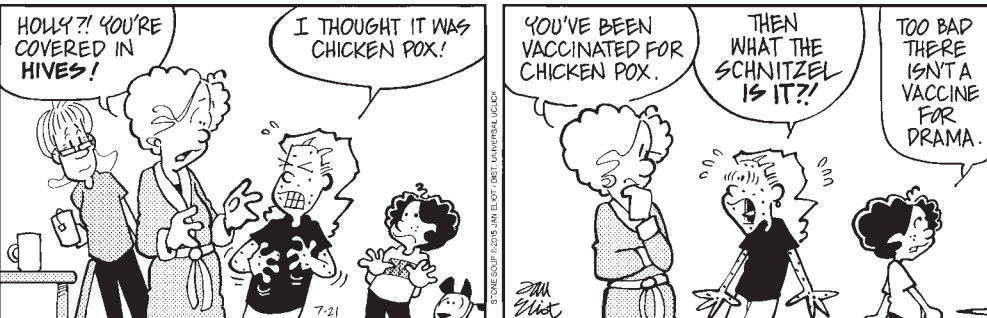
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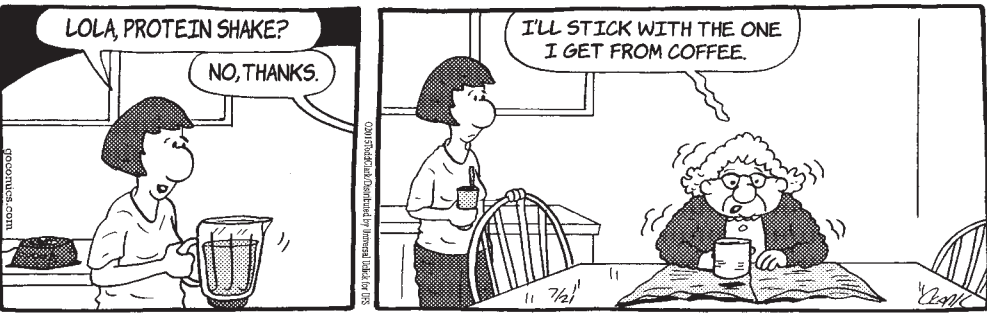
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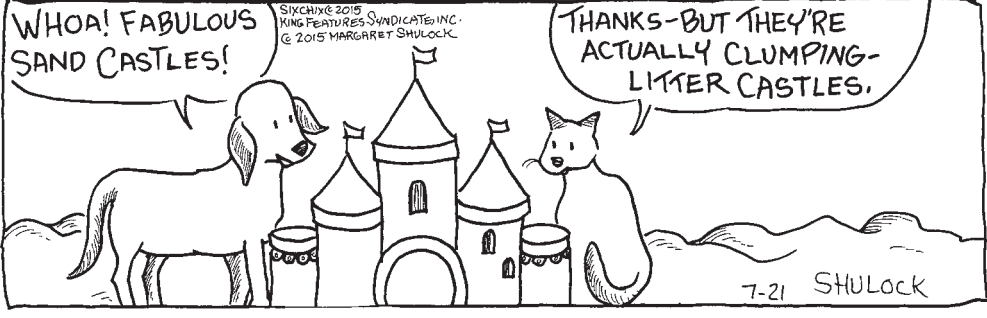
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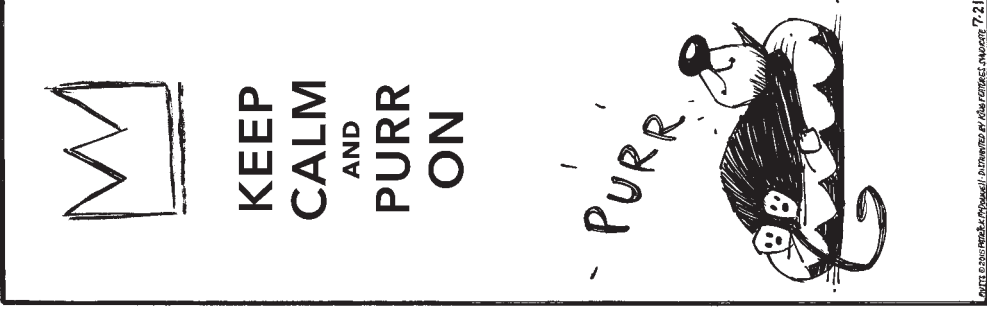
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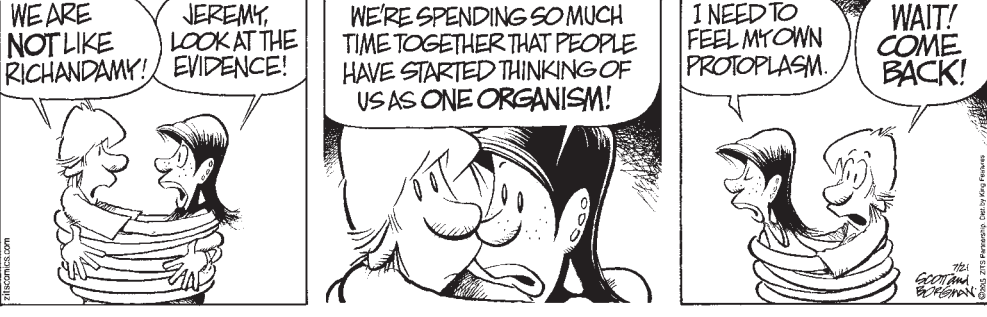
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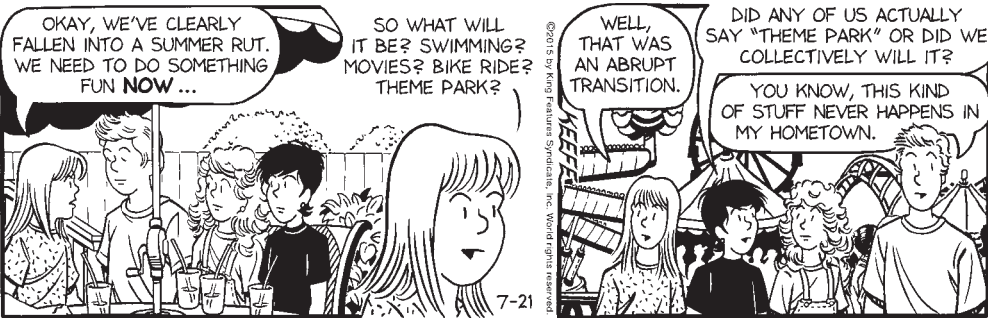
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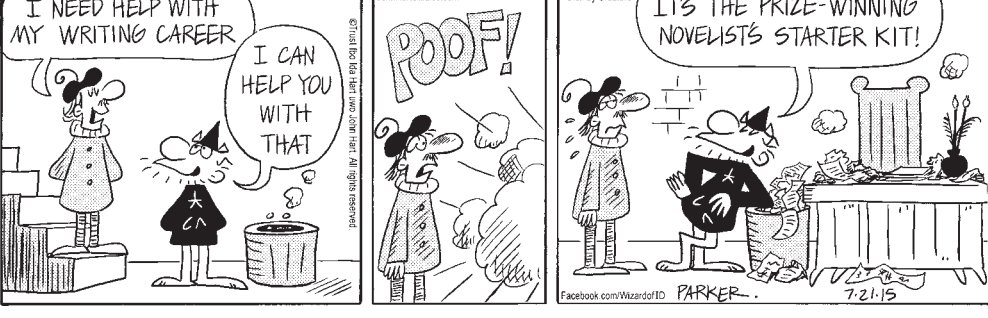
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