

Boss's grief ruining company

Dear Annie: I've been at the same job for eight years, but since the boss' wife died, it's become almost impossible to work for him. He has started drinking at work and making inappropriate comments to customers. I'm at a loss as to what I should do.

This is a small business — it's just the two of us running the place, so there is no one else to turn to for help. His children live in other states, and contacting them about this could result in them shutting the business down, putting me out of a job. He has some family here, but they don't see a problem with his behavior. I feel like I'm stuck between a rock and a hard place.

Do I contact his children? Do I let things continue, letting him destroy what remains of his reputation and mine in the process?

I enjoy helping the customers. I was planning on starting a similar business when he retires, but it feels like he's dragging me down with the ship. — *Concerned Employee*

Dear Employee: Your boss is grieving and needs help.

Annie's Mailbox

Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell
and
Marcy Sugar



First, try to speak to him and suggest grief counseling. His doctor, local hospital or hospice can offer referrals. But you should also contact his children. They need to know that Dad is in bad shape and spiraling out of control. At the rate he is going, there won't be a business left to close down, so you have little to lose. Please help him out.

Dear Annie: My husband and I are in our mid-70s and slowing down a bit. My problem is Thanksgiving. For most of our married life, I provided elaborate holiday dinners. When the kids grew up and left home, the get-togethers took place every other year, so they could spend alternating years with their in-laws and other family.

This year it is our turn, but frankly, I am tired of doing this. I feel like it is time for someone else to step up to the task and invite us to his or her home. The family will be together Labor Day weekend, and I am wondering if you have any suggestions as to how to approach this subject. — *Need Some Relief*

Dear Need: Yes. Be direct. Say to your children that you no longer have the energy to cook and host these big meals. Ask whether one of them would like to take over the hosting duties, or perhaps they would do the cooking and bring the food to your place and help you set up and clean up after. Or go to a restaurant.

Even grown children can continue to believe their parents are indestructible, and unless you tell them that you are tired, they don't realize it. But kids can also be tremendously helpful when asked, and they may have ideas of their own. In fact, they may have wanted to change the holiday setup for a while, but thought you might be offended. Give them the opportunity to step up.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). A fairytale quality touches today's situation. There is no happily ever after, but the promise of a series of days in varying degrees of happiness makes a pretty good ending, too.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Just because they are talking about it doesn't mean they are really interested in it. To get to know the people you're with, you'll have to rise above the social constraints.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The thing that gets you out of the house and talking to people will be your luckiest activity today, even if it happens to also be grueling work. Casual conversations build relationships. Relationships build your future.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The light of wisdom cannot get into a heart that has never been broken. The cracks are what make illumination possible. Wisdom may not make you feel better now, but it will help you make better choices later.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Get the feeling that you're being watched? It's probably your admirer, your boss, or it could just be the dog. (With all dogs see, sometimes you think it's a good thing they don't speak your language.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). In order to see, sometimes it's best to open your eyes; other times it's best to close them. Every sense you have will inform you today, but none will be so keen as your sixth sense.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Money, power, government, relationships, responsibilities — all of these things could affect your freedom, but none of them has to. If you can do what you want to do, you're free.

they see you doing it and then immediately want to do it, too, is because you make it look so easy. Making it look easy is the definition of being good at it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Bottom line: Nothing gets done unless you put the hours in. Your willingness to put the hours in is your success key. In fact, nothing will contribute more to your ultimate success than your adherence to a schedule.

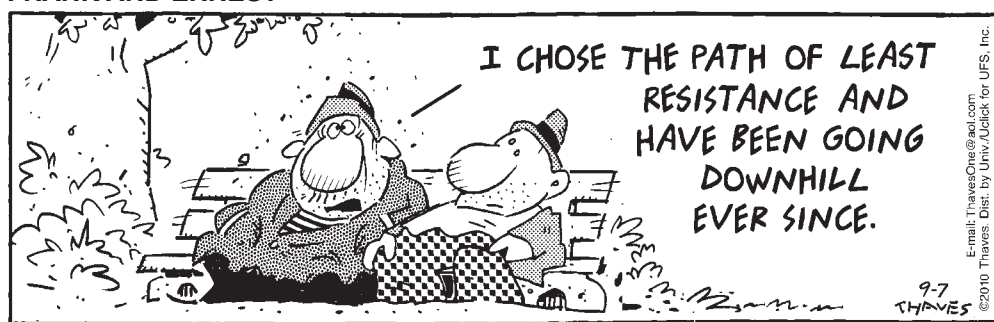
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). One crucial element to your work will be how you incorporate or ignore feedback. Let down your defenses and go into learning mode. They don't have to be totally right to have a point.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You feel like you're in an arm wrestling match with fate. This is a contest you don't want to win. If you win, you'll never know the glories that fate had in mind for you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). As you quest for new experience, consider spending a lot less energy on it. Maybe new experience doesn't have to be quested after. In fact, you're having one right now.

TUESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 8). Usually there's quite a difference between what you do for fun and what you do for money, but not this year. The activity that falls into both categories will expand your fortunes. Don't be afraid to ask, "What's in it for me?" Being realistic about this will help you feel open enough to give of yourself. This year Gemini and Leo people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 45, 21, 24, 31 and 20.

FRANK AND ERNEST



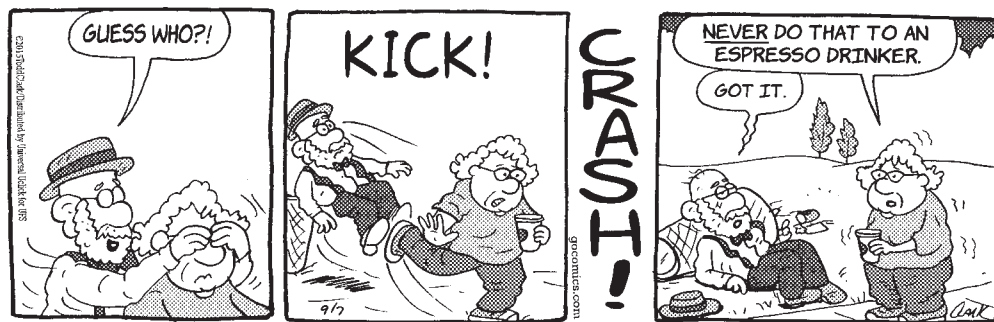
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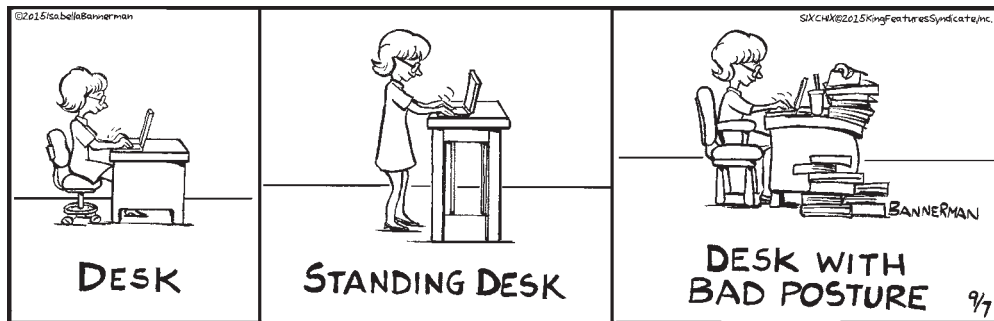
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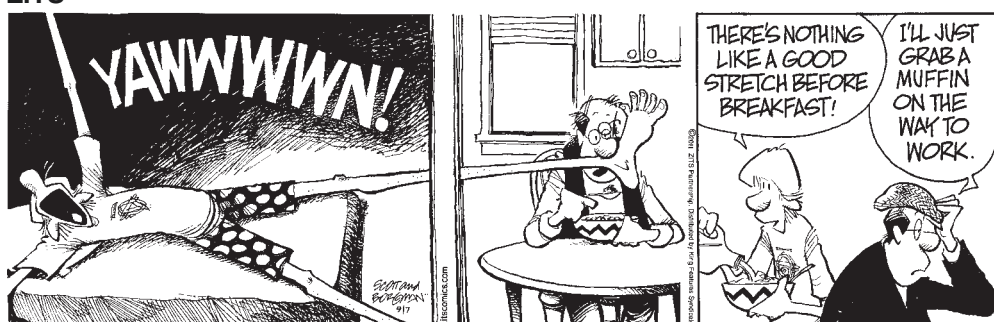
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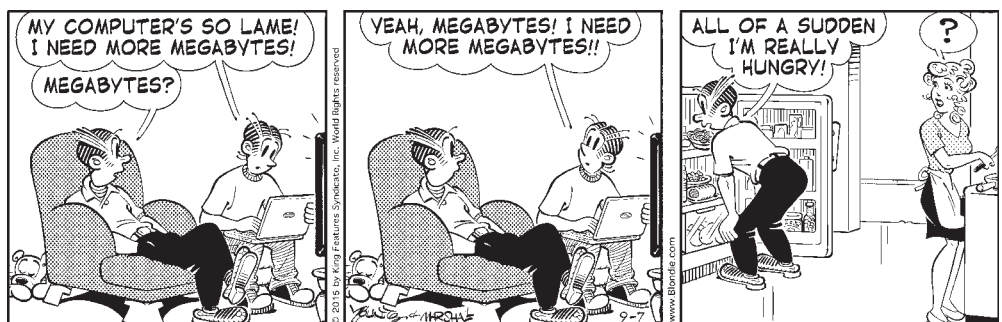
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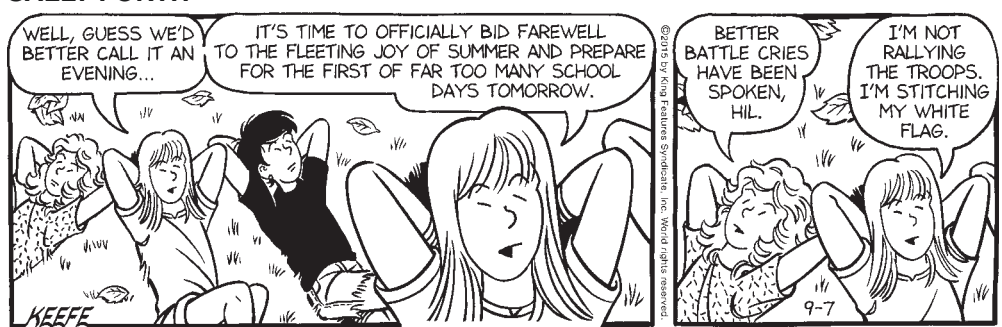
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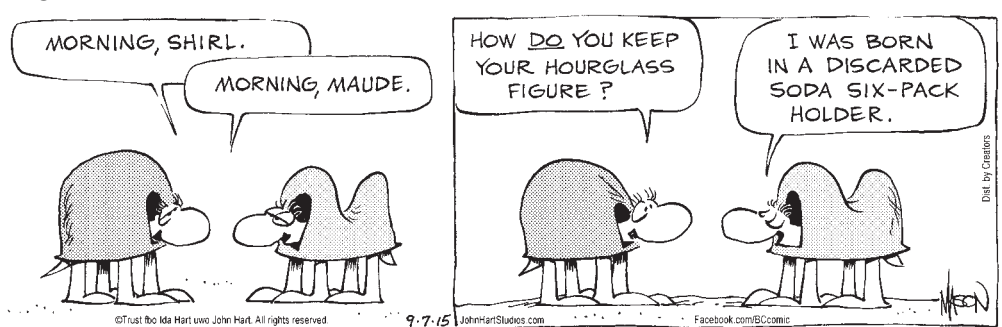
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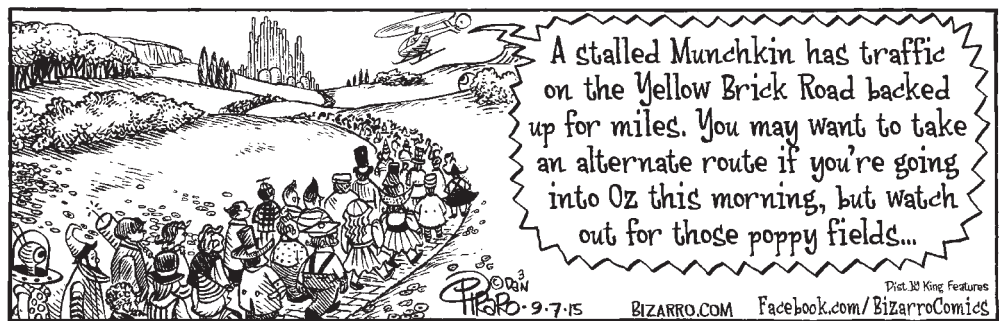
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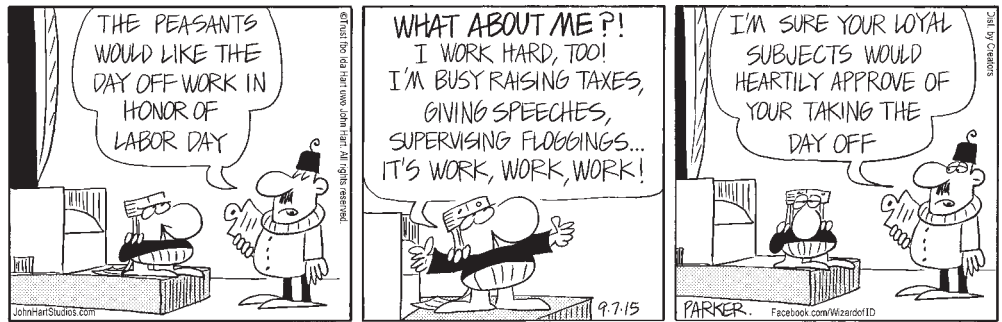
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