

OK to cut out abusive sister?

Dear Annie: I was severely abused, physically and emotionally, when I was growing up, mostly by my mother and older sister. After many years of therapy, I have turned my life around and finally am able to feel like a worthwhile person.

The trouble is, my older sister continues to be verbally abusive every time we get together, which, fortunately, is not too often. I recently bit the bullet and tried again, getting together with her and my two other sisters. Sure enough, “Betty” took the opportunity to taunt and yell at me, and ended up swinging her fists at me. This resulted in a PTSD episode for me.

I’ve finally decided to have nothing further to do with Betty, but it leaves me with feelings of guilt, since she is my sister. Am I justified in cutting off our relationship? — *Tired of Being Abused*

Dear Tired: Yes. Your abusive mother obviously left Betty with some anger issues of her own, but being related to someone doesn’t mean you have to put up with abuse. Ever. You were wise to get therapy so that you could improve your life. It might

Annie’s Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



help to ask your therapist to work on developing coping strategies for situations that could be triggers for you. Overcoming abuse can be an ongoing process.

Dear Annie: My 22-year-old son frequently has his buddies drop over for a visit. Sometimes I’m a captive audience to their conversations. These guys (and sometimes gals) don’t seem to understand that they should show some respect in their conversation due to the age difference between us.

I realize that they frequently use vulgar language when in the company of their peers, but am I out of line asking them to curtail their potty mouths in my presence?

Not only does it annoy and sometimes embarrass me, but also it makes them sound like il-

literate heathens. I guess they’re not out to impress. — *Annoyed Mother*

Dear Annoyed: Some parents would find it flattering that their children’s friends feel comfortable enough around them to speak freely. But you are right that it is also disrespectful, treating you as though your sensitivities don’t matter. It is OK for you to say, “Your language is making me blush. I would appreciate it if you would keep it under control.” Or you can speak to your son and ask him to tell his friends that they need to be more careful in your presence.

But you also do not need to be in the room when they are visiting. If your son lives with you, then he should be able to invite his friends over without his mother listening to the conversation. In fact, their vulgar language may be their way of getting you to leave the room. Unless you are willing to tell your son that his friends are not welcome, we suggest you absent yourself as much as possible, even if it means taking a long walk or going out to a movie. It also might be time to encourage your son to find a place of his own.

Tomorrow’s horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). These days it’s more difficult than ever to capture and hold anyone’s attention, but you’ll do it well quite by accident today. You’re so interested in your activities that you make other people interested, too.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). When you find yourself in a funky mood, focusing on the ecstatic moments you’ve experienced in your life will help you trample negative thought patterns like a quarterback headed toward the goal line.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You cast a spell with your bewitching presence, and so you don’t have to do much more than just show up. In fact, when you try to be more engaging, attractive, etc., it works against you. Nonchalance is your secret weapon.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You don’t need a quick anecdote, an instant solution or an extreme cleanse. What you need is a lifestyle change. It will happen through habit. Set up the routine and repeat it hundreds of times over. This is the only way.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Truly, you’d rather be the rejected than the rejecter. You hate to hurt anyone’s feelings. Even when you’re not sure you’re in the mood to socialize, you’ll move forward, make suggestions and initiate plans. Things will pan out perfectly.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Someone is fascinated by you and wants to know what makes you tick. You may find this amusing because you’re not sure that you even know what your motivation is today. You’ll figure it out together.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The best and worst of outcomes are often one and the same. Therefore, you’re not completely sure

what to hope for. Focus on executing your plan precisely and let the rest surprise you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There’s no question that you’re more attractive to others when you’re attractive to yourself. The habit you wish you didn’t have is going to have to go sooner or later, so why not now?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You’ll probably have trouble recalling the good times you’ve experienced — a sure sign that you need to create a few more of them. This weekend will bring a prime opportunity.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Wouldn’t it be awesome to see wildly, taste in Technicolor and send impulses with your touch? You’ll settle for 10 percent more awareness of your surroundings — that will make a beautiful difference.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Some people are better at compartmentalizing their feelings than others. You’ll benefit from your association with one such person and be better off for the example of good internal boundaries.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You don’t experience one emotion at a time. Your emotions mix together like recipes, turning each interaction into a unique and unforgettable concoction.

FRIDAY’S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 25). Later it won’t be hard for you to think of many reasons why this year ranks among the best of times. As you’re experiencing it, you’ll be too involved to take time for such judgments. October is excitement at a fast pace. New friends help you put together a deal. The domestic changes favor creative thinking. Leo and Sagittarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 39, 22, 37 and 16.

FRANK AND ERNEST



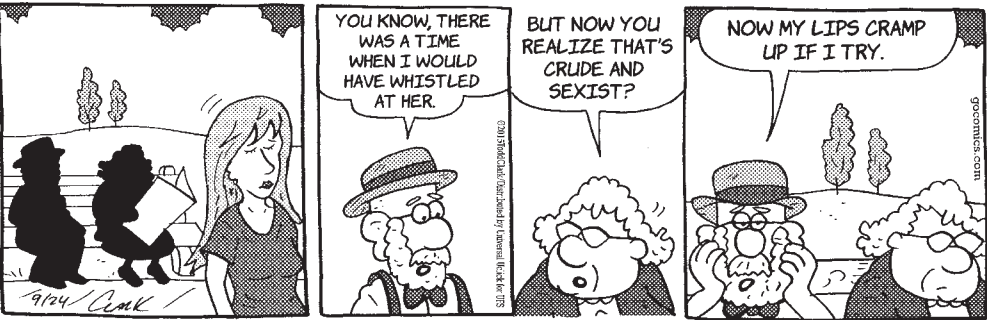
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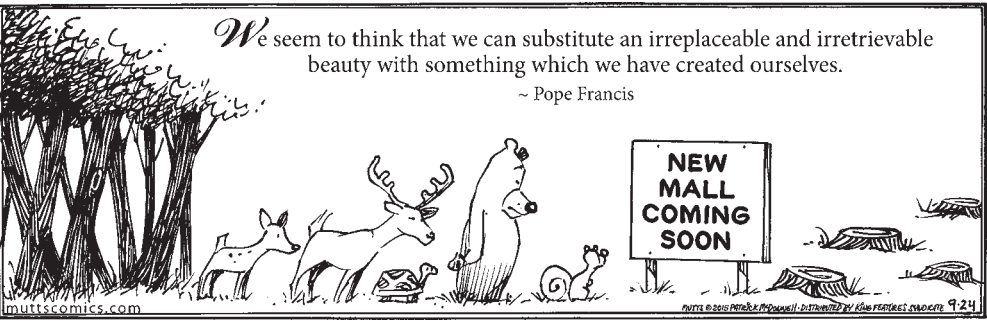
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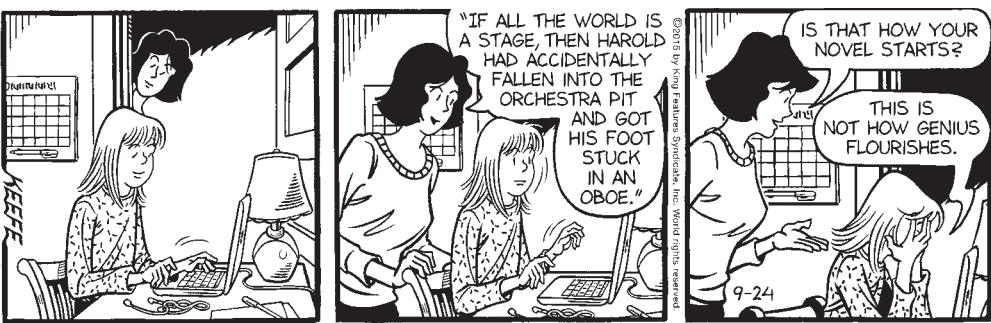
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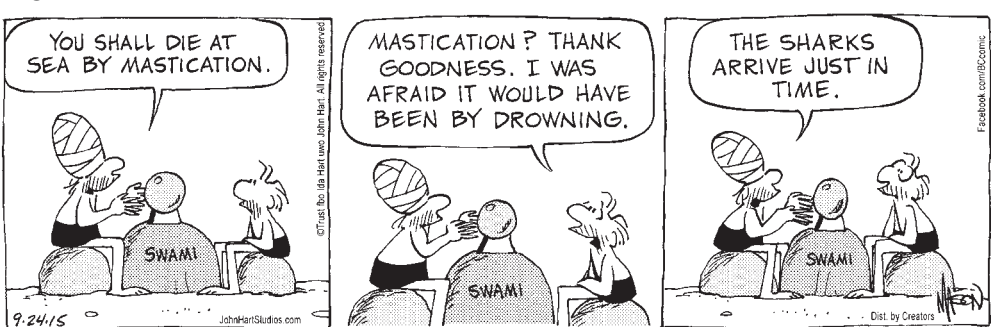
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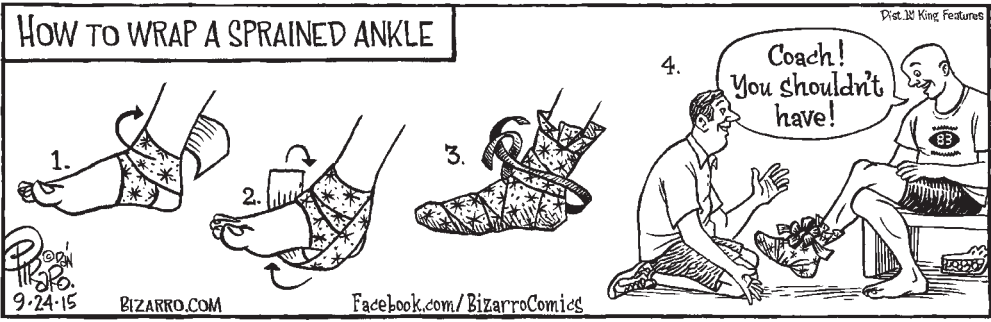
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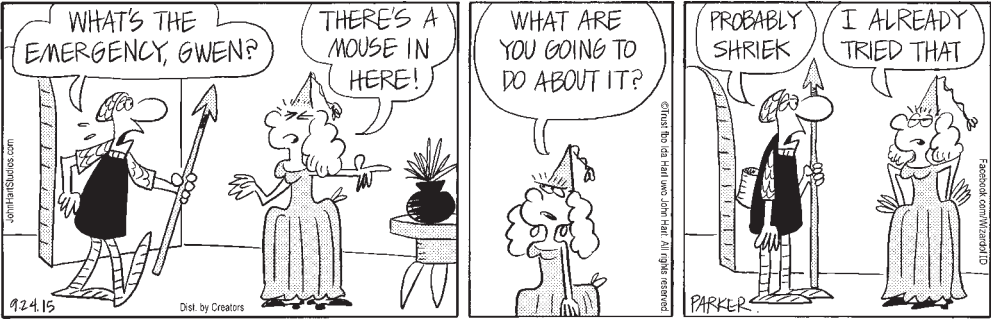
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