

Be aware of depression

Dear Annie: It has been more than 30 years since I first received my diagnosis of depression and anxiety disorder. While working in a job I didn't enjoy and anticipating the birth of my first child, I realized something wasn't right about me.

I had moments when I was filled with self-doubt and anxiety. One day, while doing a seemingly benign task at work, I went into a devastating and negative spiral and started obsessing about the likelihood of losing my job. At the urging of my wife, I sought professional help. I later learned I was prone to catastrophizing, or attaching grave consequences to unimportant events.

I have worked hard, with the support of my family, to find the most appropriate and effective treatment. While I still experience periodic setbacks, overall, I have responded well and have found a therapist who helped me identify and cope with my triggers.

Stigma is a very real factor when it comes to depression, and so many who share my illness, especially men, grapple with this in silence. My own experience has inspired me to help others and embark on a new journey as a writer. I want to share my story to let others know that depression is treatable and help is

Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



available.

October is Depression Awareness Month — the perfect opportunity to seek help for the first time. If you are worried about yourself or a loved one, please visit HelpYourselfHelpOthers.org to take an anonymous self-assessment for depression. At the website, you will learn more about the illness and available treatment options in your area. — *Michael Rafferty*

Dear Michael: Thank you for your honesty and desire to help others who suffer from depression and anxiety. Readers, please visit HelpYourselfHelpOthers.org to learn more.

Dear Annie: I know the younger generation likes to do things the easy way, but where do proper manners end and just plain laziness and the "gimme" attitude begin?

We received a postcard invitation

from a newly married couple stating that they could not hold a real housewarming party, so they were inviting us to a virtual housewarming party. The invitation included where they were registered for gifts.

I thought about copying and pasting a photo from the registry and emailing it with a note saying, "Your virtual gift is attached." But I didn't think they would understand that a real gift would not be forthcoming, so I did not respond at all.

Should I have sent a real one? — *Thought My Granddaughter Knew Better*

Dear Thought: How nice that the couple can't be bothered to entertain anyone or show them their new home (even a virtual tour), but they expect everyone to send presents anyway. We know some people would have done just that, and as a grandmother, you might have chosen to send them a gift for their new home even if they had not had a "housewarming" at all. But we agree that this type of invitation is pretty tacky. And what's more depressing is that your granddaughter is not the only one doing it. But we love your idea of a virtual gift for a virtual housewarming. Maybe if enough people responded that way, these ridiculous invitations would cease.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Does it feel like the only thing holding you back from the one you love is timing? If so, that will improve this afternoon. Stay in the moment that's unfolding instead of wishing you were in another one.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The rewards of your latest effort are trickling in. This is something to celebrate! Do be brief about it, though, because there's much, much more work to be done to take advantage of this momentum.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Helping people makes you happy, but you don't live to serve. Get out and get served, if only to remind yourself of this. You'll have more to give when you feel taken care of, too.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). What you know about one small area of life is the ticket to understanding how many things work. So don't underestimate your importance to a project or organization and to the world at large.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If you had to sit down and figure out how to be you, you couldn't come up with half of the talents, tendencies and endearing quirks you possess. Just do what's innate today, and you'll be brilliant.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Once you give your word, you honor it. Therefore, as a rule, you don't give your word easily. You'll be asked (by someone who is pretty charismatic) for a casual agreement. Resist.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You won't always be guided by a shining beacon. Deciding who you are can be a process of elimination. You know you're not a person who likes this, that or the other. What's next

to try out? **SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Don't spend your time like the political parties do, each proving the other is unfit to lead. The real question is: Who can get the job done? Show that it's you. Get in there and do it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It would appear that you need more money to accomplish a goal. This is only half-true. Money will be necessary, yes, but what's more crucial is a clearer vision. Once you get that, the money comes rolling in.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A Dutch proverb says, "A handful of patience is worth more than a bushel of brains." Stick to the simple plan, and work it until it's complete. Success!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Design, engineering, moving well in your environment — it all matters to your day's ambitions in both big and small ways. For instance, comfortable shoes can affect your destiny.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). People say a lot of things. Sometimes they just can't live up to their words. If you disregard what a person says and carry on your relationship based strictly on what the person does, you'll be better off.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Oct. 22). Your competitive spirit will be activated. Over the next six months, your main concerns get addressed and fixed to some extent so you can move on to new excitement. There's a luxurious feeling to 2016. February brings a life-changing business arrangement. Love and friendship have you laughing through spring. Gemini and Sagittarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 16, 39, 42 and 7.

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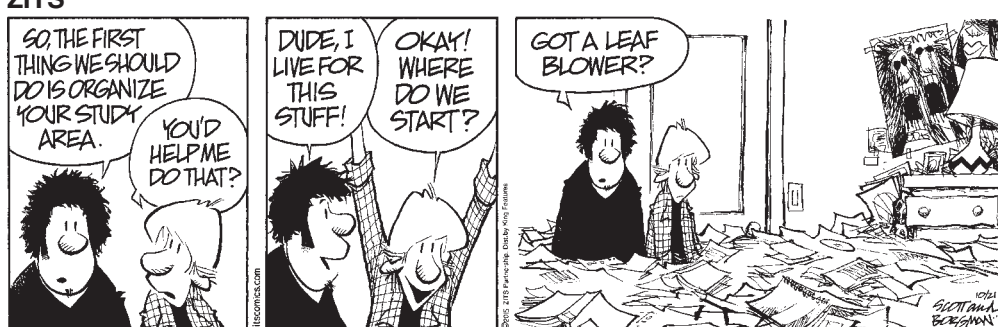
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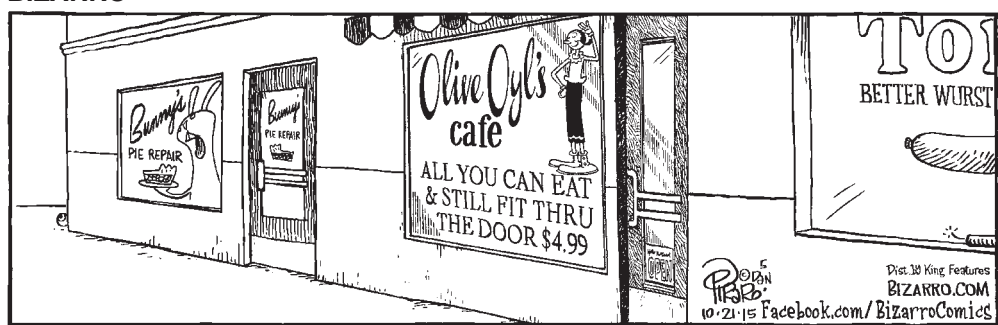
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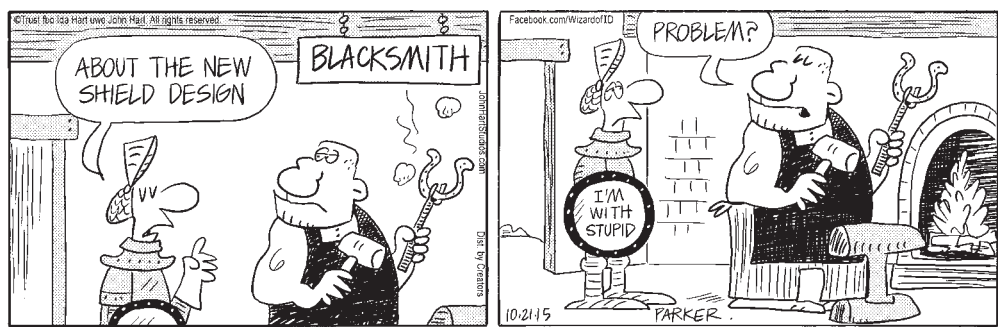
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