

Is overworked wife abused?

Dear Annie: I'd like to know if this is considered spousal abuse. A young couple become born-again Christians. The husband decides he wants to go back to school to become a minister. He quits his corporate job and moves his family out of state. His wife supports him and the children for four years as best she can. He graduates and "just can't find the right job." He volunteers two days a week counseling people.

In the meantime, they are barely getting by. They don't have enough money to send the kids to college, and they can't afford their daughter's wedding. The husband has decided not to get a paying job because he's doing "God's work." He sleeps late every day and spends hours on the computer writing religious blog posts. His wife works full time and does the cleaning, shopping and all household chores.

I think this is emotional abuse. What do you think? — *Concerned Relative*

Dear Relative: We think this is not your business. When couples make decisions about who brings in the money, it's between the two of them. Even if his wife

Annie's Mailbox

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and
Marcy Sugar



doesn't like it and is unhappy, that doesn't necessarily mean it is abusive. Only unequal and frustrating.

Every marriage is different. What is intolerable to you may be manageable for her. We agree it would be worrisome if she feels trapped and unable to change her situation, but you do not indicate that this is the case. There are scholarships, grants and loans available for state and community colleges, and a wedding can be punch and cake in the backyard. Please don't project your feelings onto her. She may think her marriage is perfectly fine. If you are a close family member, talk to her. Ask how she's doing. See what the situation is. If you believe counseling is needed, she may be amenable to discussing things with her clergy person. And if she

gives you the impression that her husband is controlling all the money or her access to family members and friends, please urge her to call the National Domestic Violence Hotline (thehotline.org) at 1-800-799-SAFE.

Dear Annie: What do I say to people who tell me to smile? The reason I don't like to smile is because my smile is ugly and I look horrible — like I'm making a face. How do I get them to stop? — *A Daily Reader*

Dear Reader: Well, you could grimace and then maybe they'd stop asking, but here's a different suggestion: If you are embarrassed by your smile, see if something can be fixed. Often, it is as simple as seeing a dentist, or practicing in front of a mirror until you can manage something natural. It's also possible that you think you have a terrible smile when, in fact, no one else is bothered by it.

Folks who are ashamed of or concerned about their smiles are often self-conscious to the point where it interferes with their social life. This puts you at a tremendous disadvantage. There is no shame in making your life better. Please see what can be done.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Often, kindred spirits are those with whom you share many similarities. In today's case, well, you don't really have much in common, but your complimentary energies will bring both of you luck.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Sure, you need attention. But not as much as someone close to you needs help. So your needs will be overshadowed by the more pressing ones of the moment. Don't worry. Your time is coming.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You don't take yourself too seriously, and it's apparent in the way you interact today, unafraid to say what crosses your mind even though many wouldn't dare state the truth in the matter. Someone could fall in love with you for this.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You never want to bother anyone, however it's appropriate to ask for help. You're really not putting anyone out to do so. In fact, you'll be providing a service. Others need to give, too — so take your turn in the receiving line.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You've caught beauty in ugly places. You've carved self-worth out of criticism and neglect. You've found freedom and authenticity in a controlled, artificial environment. For these reasons and more, celebrate yourself.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). With the lunar light pumping up your attraction quotient, you'll get more attention than you're comfortable with. It will feel nice at first, but soon you'll need to apply it to a higher cause.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). When you can experience conditions without commenting on them: That's higher evolutionary human stuff there. Your stoicism will be admired today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It is said that youthful enthusiasm can be put to better use by the elderly. You certainly won't regret indulging in today's bit of immature fun. While you're at it, why not go all-in?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). As much as you would love to know everything about your chosen subject, there is simply too much to fit into one lifetime of study. Just know that you'll build for the next generation. This will be handed down through the ages.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). They will buy the idea. They will buy the way you deliver it. They will buy you — or at least that part of you that can be bought. Consider this your lucky day for conveying your important creations.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There's a spiritual fire in you, one that was lit by the match of love. As it is with most matches, the thing that sets it ablaze is friction. Don't be afraid of that. Don't back off. Lean into it.

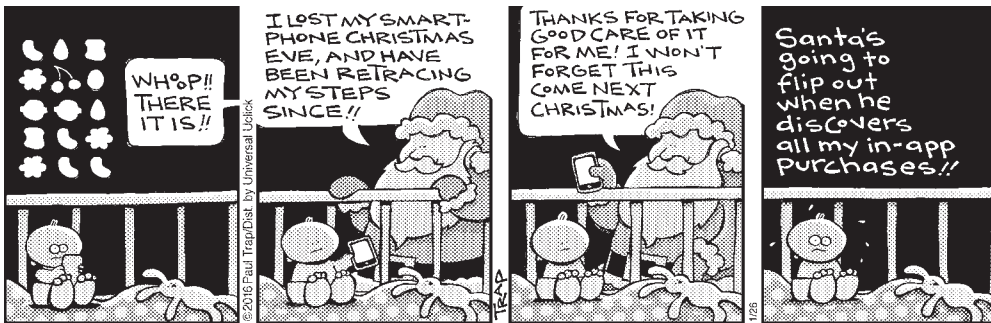
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There is an exact right time for everything, and yet you cannot know exactly what time it is, because if you concentrated too much on the impossible logic of time, you'd miss the window. This is something that can only be felt.

WEDNESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 27). You are what you believe yourself to be, also what your loved ones, colleagues and others believe you to be. It's not that you're wishy-washy; you're quite the opposite. You're strong and clear, versatile and capable. Expect many remarkable experiences, some even magical. February brings epiphany; May brings love, and July brings money. Virgo and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 45, 39, 1, 22 and 19.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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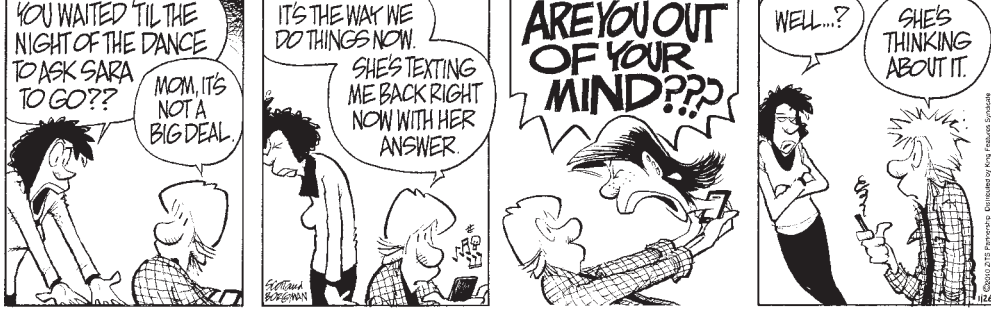
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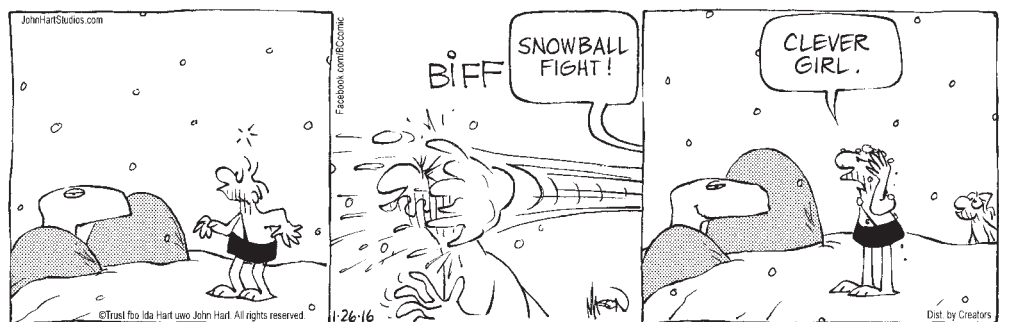
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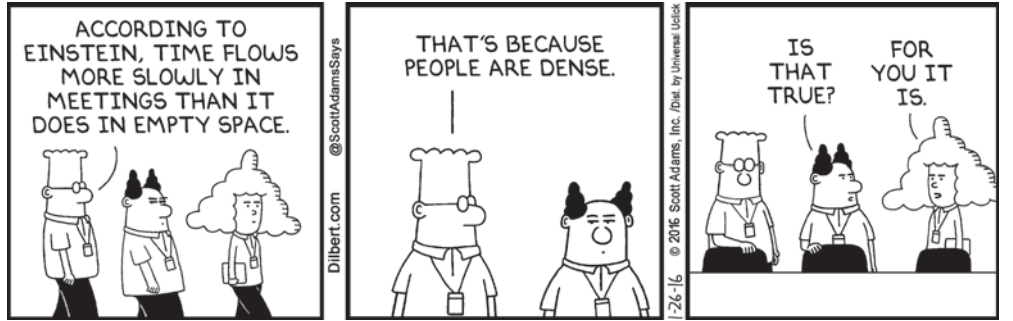
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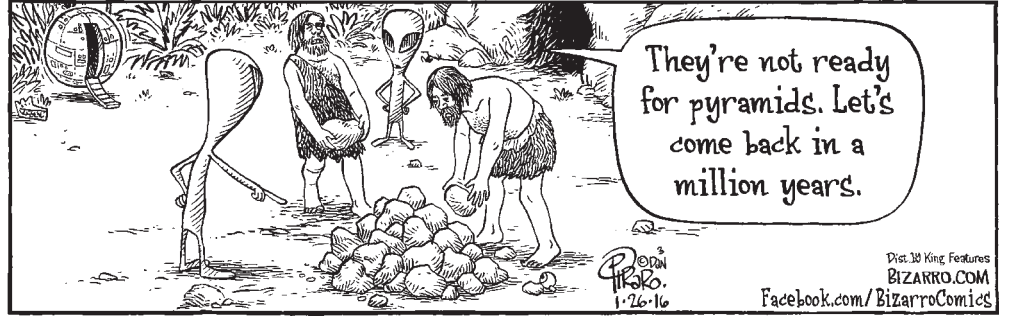
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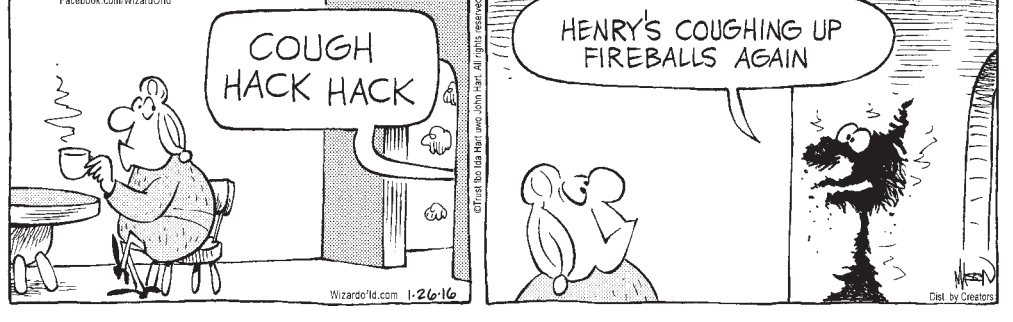
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