

Man doesn't want aging parents

Dear Annie: I have been married for 25 years to "Betty," a beautiful, intelligent, caring woman from Greece. Our marriage has been good. We are financially solid, and we share values and interests.

I am 63 and retired. Betty still works, and she makes a good salary. I'm in reasonably good health, although the doctors say I have to watch my heart. I don't have the same energy I once did, and spending quiet time in my house has become important to me. I enjoy being able to focus my energies doing things on the weekends with Betty.

Here's the problem: Betty's parents still live in Greece and they are having financial difficulties. A couple of weeks ago, Betty informed me that her parents may have to come live with us. Annie, I enjoy having her parents visit, but it is difficult for me to host others for an extended period of time. Our house is not that big and we'd be on top of one another. We also live in a small town where there isn't much to do. I'd be with them in the house all day while Betty is at her office.

When I told Betty that I don't want her parents living here, she became terribly hurt and said she'd

Annie's Mailbox

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divorce me if it came to that. Am I wrong to want to spend my retirement years with my wife rather than care for her parents? — *Stuck in Upstate NY*

Dear Stuck: Betty should not put her parents before you, but let's face it, she is attached to them and probably feels guilty for having moved away in the first place. You say you are financially comfortable. Can you and Betty help her parents afford an apartment or condo in a senior complex that is close to your home but allows all of you to remain independent? Her parents may prefer to be where they have space of their own, with activities that keep them busy and engaged. Try to get Betty to see this in a more positive light — doing what's best for her parents while keeping her marriage intact.

Dear Annie: I am responding

to the answer you gave to "Going Mad in Canada," who has been married for 30 years to a wife who stays home, doesn't clean and doesn't cook. You said she isn't likely to change after 30 years, and that he should find ways to cope, maybe hiring help, and cooking and cleaning only for himself, letting her do the same.

Are you out of your minds? He's supposed to go to work all day, come home to a lazy spouse, cook his own meals, wash his own clothes and clean the house? I had been living with this for 25 years, but I found the answer. I put a code on my TV, so it wouldn't turn on until I get home. Next, I canceled our Internet service. I began eating by myself at restaurants, so I'd get a decent cooked meal. After about a month, she started cleaning and cooking.

Why should one spouse take all of the responsibility of bringing home the money, cleaning, cooking and washing clothes while the other spouse does nothing? — *Clean House in Pennsylvania*

Dear Penn: Your marriage sounds like an unpleasant mismatch. But we can't argue with success, and this obviously was your way to "cope."

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You are like Michelangelo today, chipping and chiseling away at the marble so you can liberate the angels inside. Truly, when you create, you are the most alive.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your mind doesn't work alphabetically — no one's does. The associations you make to keep things straight will amuse you and anyone lucky enough to share ideas with you, too.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Conversation helps you flex your creative muscles. You might be surprised at what certain people say. It's not what you would have predicted, but then again, you have a way of bringing unusual things out of people.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). What comes automatically to you would require a great effort from another person. This is a perk you get to enjoy because long ago you put in the time and energy necessary to obtain some good habits.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). What you're conscious of is only a small portion of the story. This is one more reason why you shouldn't worry so much about the things you said. It wasn't about your word choices. There's quite a lot going on right now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've come a long way, and now you'll be retracing some of those steps. You're not exactly in the place you wanted to land, but you're close. Once you back up, you'll see where you needed to turn.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Will the person be able to meet your expectations or do you need a change of cast? You could just ask! You might not get a completely honest answer, but you'll get the answer

you need to make a decision.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It's natural to create a buffer around yourself. It's a matter of protection, really. You prefer to control how involved you are with others. You don't always want to be so intimately known.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Sure, there are things you could be doing better, and in time you'll get to the place you want to be. But for now, celebrate where you're at. You are doing so many things right.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You don't want the same things as the people around you want, yet you still feel like you're in competition for some reason. Maybe it's because you simply thrive on challenge.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Because you have higher standards, you'll be held to them. This will be true regardless of whether you share your expectations or not. You're in your own category. Really, this can't be helped.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Someone approves of you, another person disapproves — no matter what you do, you can't please everyone. Work on making yourself happy and you'll be just fine.

TUESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (MARCH 15). The best you have is, quite simply, the best there is. You suspected that was true, and at this juncture there is no point in being modest about it. Everyone knows. Enjoy it! This is your moment. Your brainchild will put money in your bank account in April. You'll have fun keeping your word in June. Libra and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are 6, 20, 1, 11 and 18.

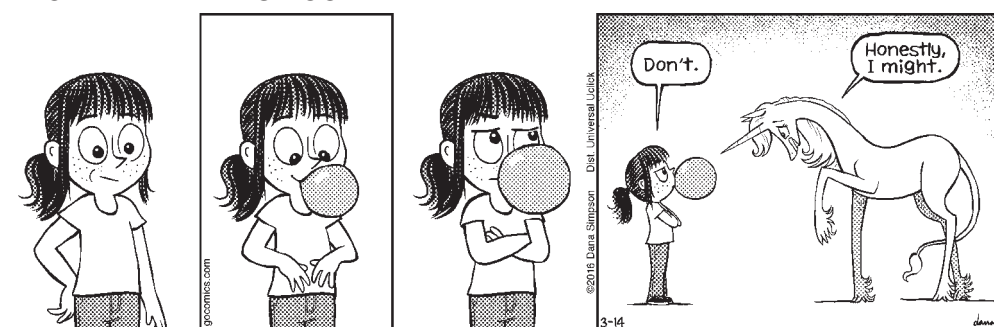
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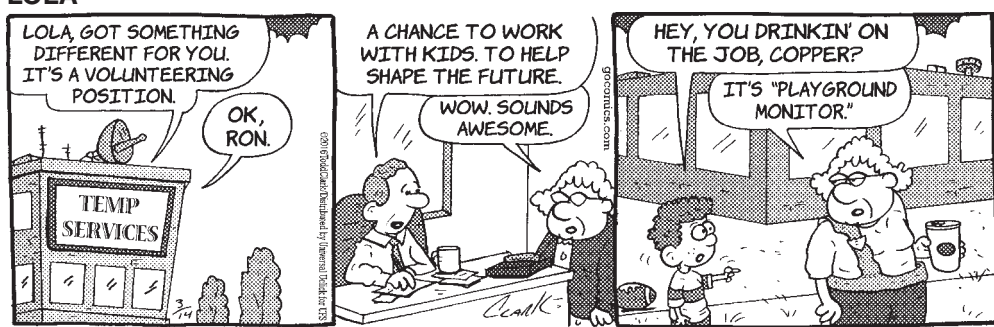
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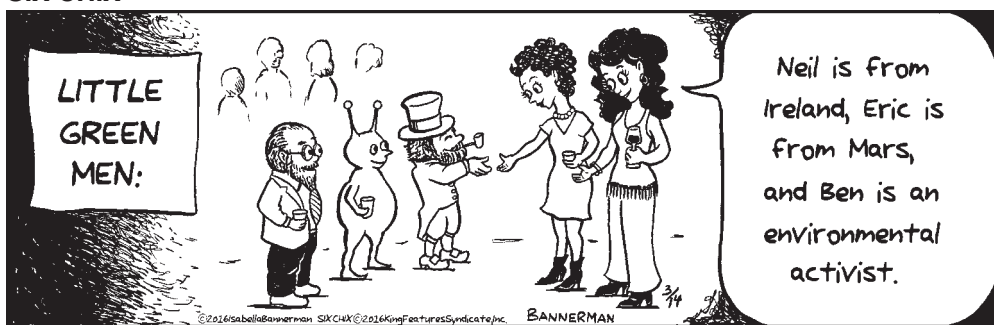
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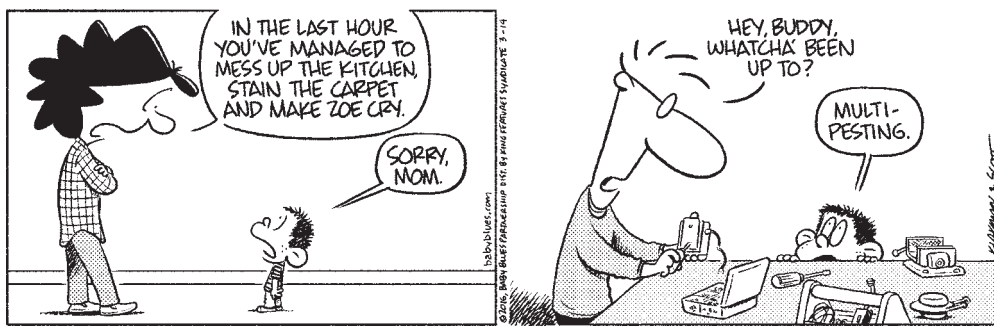
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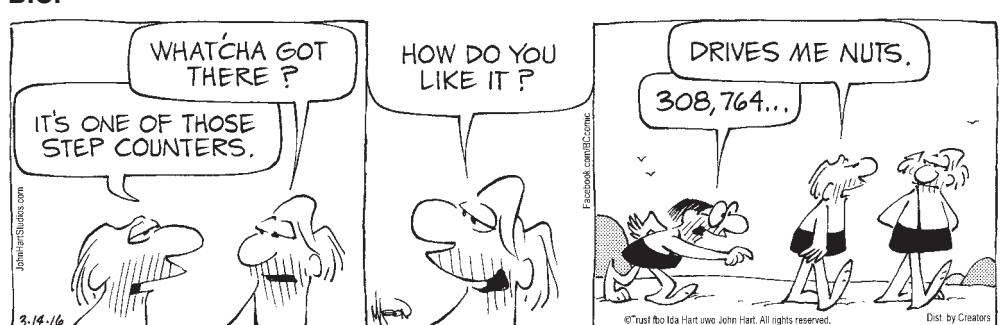
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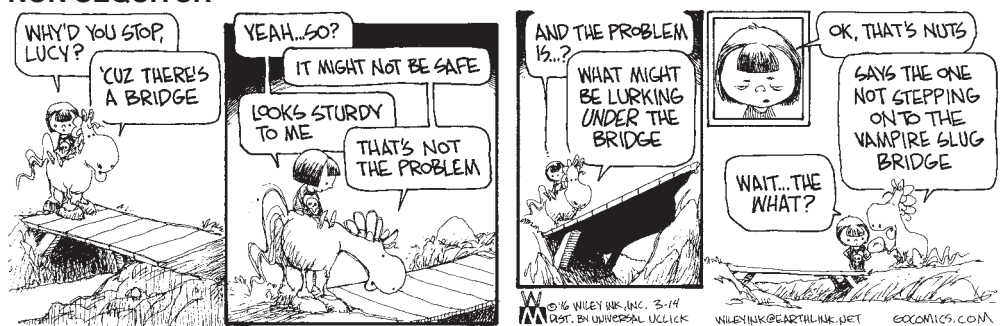
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ROSE IS ROSE

