

Join together to kick butts

Dear Annie: As a youth anti-tobacco advocate, I'm incredibly proud of our country's progress against tobacco. We've cut smoking among high school seniors by nearly 70 percent since 1997. I know we can make the next generation tobacco-free, but we've got a lot of work left to do.

Tobacco is still the No. 1 cause of preventable death in our country. It kills nearly half a million Americans each year, most of whom started smoking as kids. The tobacco industry spends billions on marketing, and they use slick ads and sweet flavors that attract kids under 21.

My state of Hawaii is leading the way in winning this fight. Last year, I joined with other advocates to push for a law prohibiting tobacco sales to anyone under 21. When I testified at a hearing, I realized my voice could make a difference in my community and state. The law passed, and on Jan. 1, Hawaii became the first state to raise the tobacco age to 21. Our U.S. Senator Brian Schatz has introduced a bill in Congress to raise the age nationally.

Across America, young people are fighting Big Tobacco. On March 16, we'll hold Kick Butts Day, a

Annie's Mailbox

Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



national day of activism sponsored by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. We'll share our stories using #iKickButts. Together, we will create the first tobacco-free generation. — Sabrina Ray Olaes

Dear Sabrina Ray Olaes: That would really be something we all could be proud of. It's amazing how many young people are still unaware of the long-term dangers of smoking when they pick up that first cigarette. Or they think those risks don't apply to them, and they can quit any time. It's not so. We hope our readers will visit kickbuttsday.org to see how they can help.

Dear Annie: I am a certified school nurse, but I understand the frustrations of teachers. They are being mandated to teach more and more, with increasing pushes for accountability, and with raises and

evaluations tied to test scores. Most are highly educated professionals with a passion for children and education. They are mandated not only to teach the subjects that are important for a student's education, but also to teach things that should be taught at home. Morality, ethics and character education are now woven into the school's curriculum. At what point do we hold parents responsible and accountable?

You've printed letters from those who want schools to teach cursive and how to balance a checkbook. Instead of pointing fingers at schools, I challenge them to take responsibility by teaching these skills at home. There are plenty of websites and online workbooks and tools for teaching various subjects at home. — *Certified School Nurse*

Dear Nurse: There are many subjects that used to be covered in school, but are no longer part of the curriculum. A lot of folks are upset by this, but times change and kids need different skills today. Some subjects are going to be dropped, and this is where parents and grandparents can fill the void. You want the kids to learn cursive or to make correct change? Here is your opportunity to teach them.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). There's a sense of normalcy restored in a very unusual relationship. This will be a relief. Now that things are relatively calm, you will be better able to concentrate on important work.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you are too focused on results, you'll miss the best part. Keep your eyes and heart open, especially in the early evening. Note that someone needs you more than he or she is letting on!

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You need a better system of accountability. Don't wait to see what happens — take action now. Make a bet with someone who will show you no mercy. This is how you'll get things done.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You've cultivated quite a good crew of emotional supporters. You don't have to wait until you really need them to lean in and test the strength of this. Call out to your people! You'll love how they echo your mood today.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There's so much to be happy about in your life right now. Make a list of it to help you remember better when things get hectic this afternoon. The more grateful you feel, the more powerful you'll be. Tap into that!

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You don't feel like you're having a problem, but there's still someone out there who knows a better way to do it. Investigate your whims. This is what will lead you to find the people who can help you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are so many people who want to hang out with you. Be choosy. You can afford to be. Plus, there's absolutely no reason you should place yourself in the company of people who bring you down.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You know how to take care of yourself, but you don't always do it. Well, that's going to have to change. It's not just about you, you know. Your loved ones are also better off when you're operating at the top of your game.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You include everyone, even if you're not sure they're going to like each other or have much in common. You'll be surprised at the ways people from different parts of your life might connect.

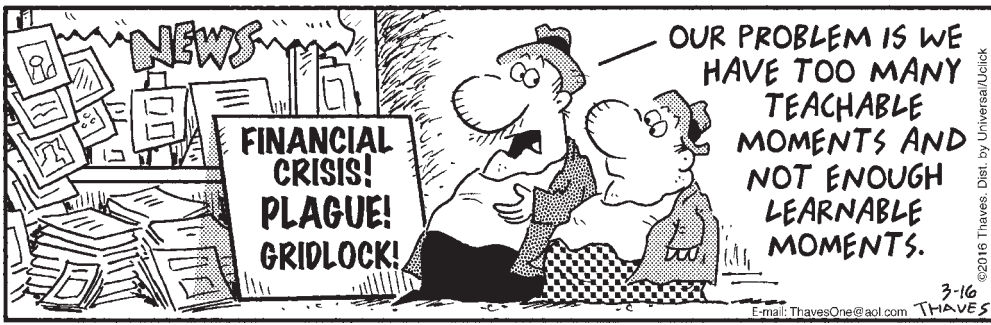
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're trying to help someone else but it keeps turning out the same way — you're the one getting helped! It's like no matter how selfless you get, the benefits still find you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You don't do anything half way. Knowing this about yourself will make you slow to commit today. You really understand the full scope of a job and that's why you're not sure you want to take it on.

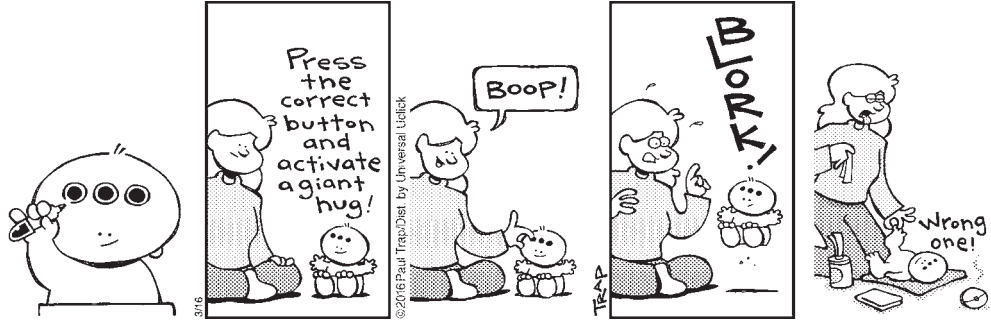
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). That person who needs so much from you now is afraid of underperforming or not being enough to attract your undying love. Whatever you do to ease this person's mind will be worth the effort.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (MARCH 17). You'll feel like you don't know what you're doing, but your instincts are hot. When you follow through without hesitation or doubt, something beautiful happens! April involves you in a new team. You'll exchange promises with a loved one in May. The travel you do in July and October will help you make money in 2017. Leo and Taurus adore you. Your lucky numbers are 40, 33, 21, 7 and 14.

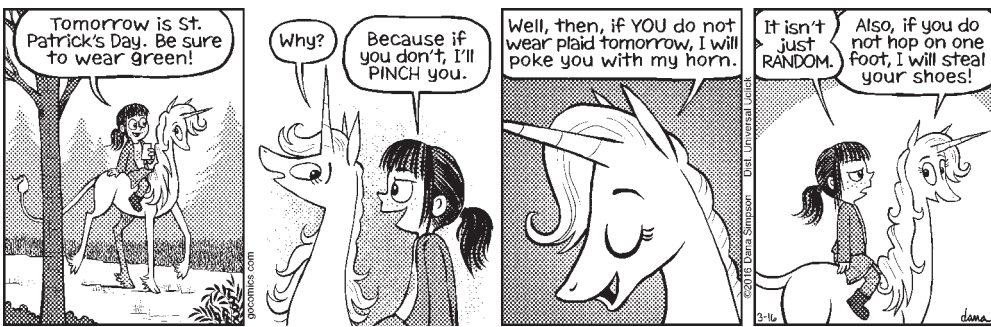
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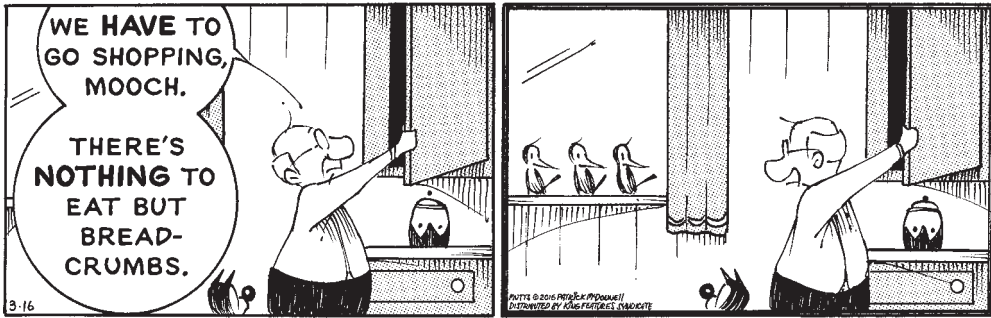
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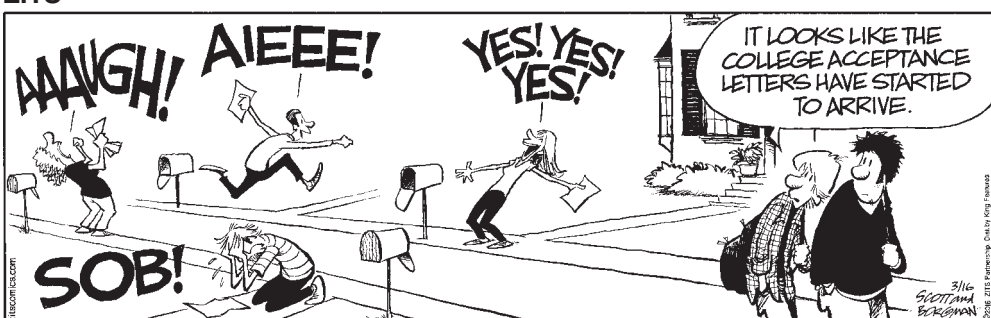
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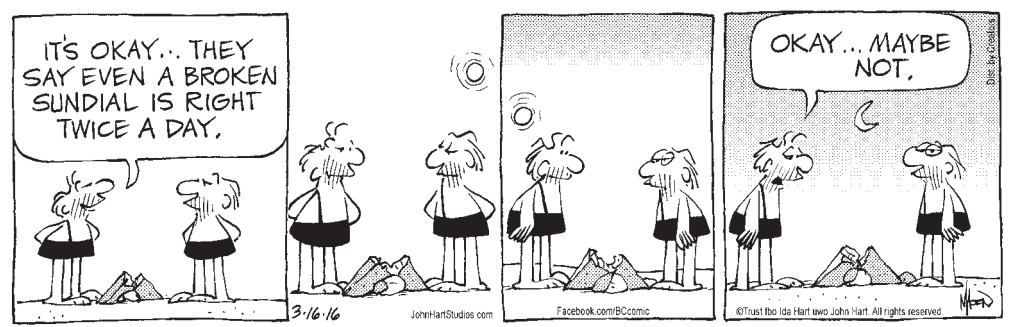
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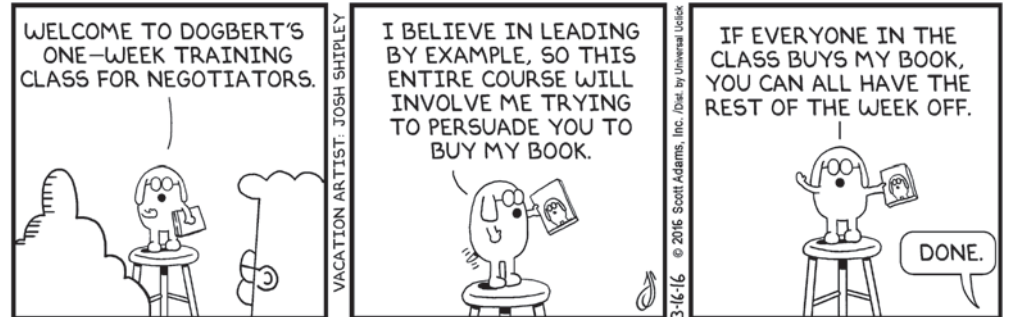
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