

Everyone likes a quitter

Dear Annie: My dad has been a smoker for his whole life, which is why we were all so proud of him when he announced that he had successfully quit several months ago. I was elated. It had been an ongoing argument between my parents throughout my childhood. It always stressed me out to hear them fighting about it. It feels so good to know that my dad actually cares about his health and knows that we care, too. He's even taken up jogging, something he was never able to do before because he'd start hacking up a lung.

However, the most recent time I visited home (I'm away at college), I caught my dad smoking outside in the garage one night. I quickly turned away, and I know he doesn't know that I caught him, but I am so devastated. My whole family would be devastated. The next day, I asked him how the not-smoking thing was going, seeing whether he'd confess, and he just said, "Great!" I feel so betrayed that he could just flat out lie about it. Along with feeling upset, I am torn when it comes to handling this situation because I know I can't keep it to myself. My mom works so hard and cares so much. I don't like seeing her lied to. I feel as if she deserves to know the truth. Now I'm just trying to figure out how to

Dear Annie



By
Annie Lane

Creators
Syndicate
Inc.

go about dropping this bomb on her when I know it will just break her heart and my dad will be angry. How do I do this? — *Nonsmoker Son*

Dear Nonsmoker: So he had a slip-up? Surprise! Your dad's human. Cigarettes are highly addictive, and he's been smoking his whole life.

Talk to him about the matter privately. Be compassionate and try to understand where he's coming from. On average, it takes eight to 11 tries before a smoker successfully stops for good. Don't quit on him.

Dear Annie: I've learned that there is a difference between constructive criticism and just hurting someone's feelings, and I'm having a hard time separating the two right now.

My friend is a loud chewer. She smacks her food. She talks with her mouth full. She slurps. It is disgust-

ing. I find it incredible that somebody could get away with being raised that way, but the rest of her family is the same way, so she clearly has no idea.

She really is a great girl and one of my closest friends, but this is a major pet peeve. Also, she complains about how she never gets asked on second dates, and I can't help but wonder whether this is why.

I just don't know whether that kind of habit is one that can be easily broken, and I worry for her. I don't know how to go about telling her that she is being gross when she eats without having it come out in a way that would just hurt her feelings. All I know is I feel a responsibility to do something about this. What do you think I should do? — *Quiet Friend*

Dear Quiet: I don't doubt that her dates have had allergic reactions to these "see-food" dinners. Few things are less attractive than chewing with one's mouth open.

Tell her, in a gentle way, that it might be beneficial for her to watch out and make sure she is conscious of how she is eating. You'll be doing her a huge favor. Good friends are honest friends — even when it means telling a pal she eats like Cookie Monster (in much politer terms, of course).

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You will be where the action is, whether it seems like it at the time or not. It's one of those instances when everyone involved will look back and say, "That's where it started."

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You are present for your friends when they need you. This is easier for you because you don't over-think it. You're not worried about what to say and do. You wisely know that just your presence is enough.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It will be easier to laugh and be lighthearted when you are around people who are buoyant of spirit like you are. You can't always choose your company, but stay on the lookout for fun people you can connect with in the future.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Do you feel lucky to be an object of sweet affection? Your face is the first thing a certain person thinks of in the morning and the last vision of the day before drifting off to sleep.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You didn't think you could do it, but you went for it anyway, and now look where you are! From this perfectly prime position you can make a play for your next impossible goal, but much planning is required. Think it over and over today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your intention to spread enough positive energy and goodwill to make a difference in the world will land lovely today. "Enough" will be reached by lunchtime. It's the simple, small, courteous acts that will matter most.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're a giver. The world needs more givers. But the givers of the world also need to remember that there's a point at which giving can start annoying the receivers. Part of being a good

giver is knowing when to take. **SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** As something very pleasant drops into your world (or someone, as the case may be) caution is called for. This could be very addictive. Go slow; make good choices.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you don't take the morning problems too personally you can likely solve most of them by the afternoon. It wouldn't be any fun at all if you could get what you needed without incident or complication!

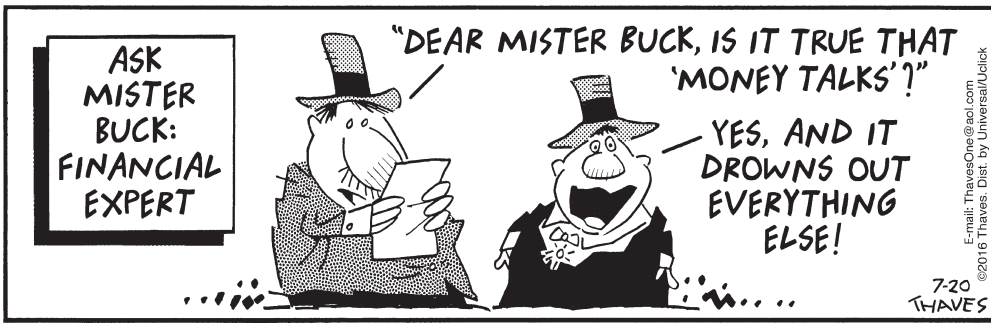
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Saying yes to something you'd typically decline will be the right move. Fifteen minutes chatting with a friend or playing with children will make your entire mood go brighter.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The recipe for today's gentle joy: one part predictability, two parts unpredictability. Plan a special occasion and you'll get just that! Nothing major is required; preparing a delicious dish may be more than enough.

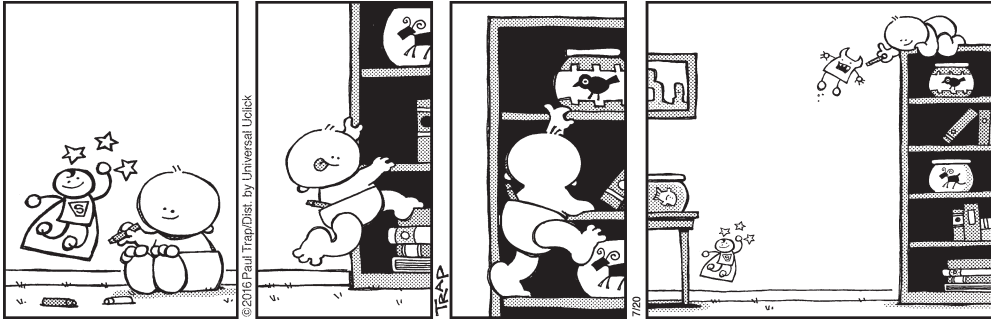
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Who do you suspect are the people in your life who've loved you the most? Considering the answer to this question will give you the grateful heart that allows you to extract the beauty from this day.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 21). A surprise-ball of a year! Your attitude of receptiveness (tempered only slightly, which is more than enough, by your brilliant and constant common sense) invites the wonder and "zing" while leaving out the trouble. Relationships entail focus and pleasure. Home-building feeds the needs of your family at year's end. Aquarius and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 40, 33, 21, 4 and 19.

FRANK AND ERNEST



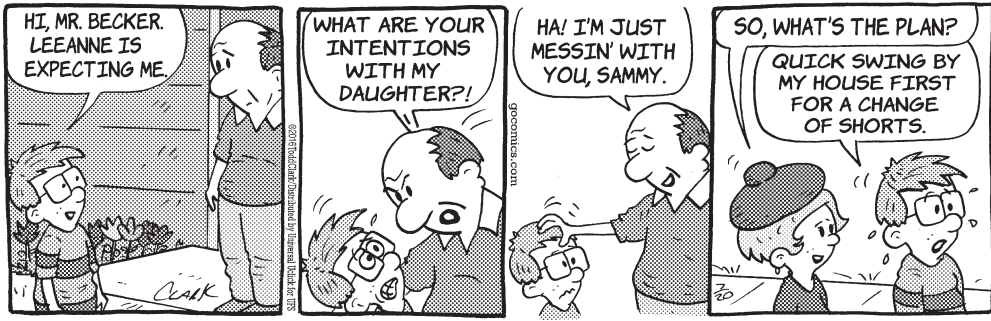
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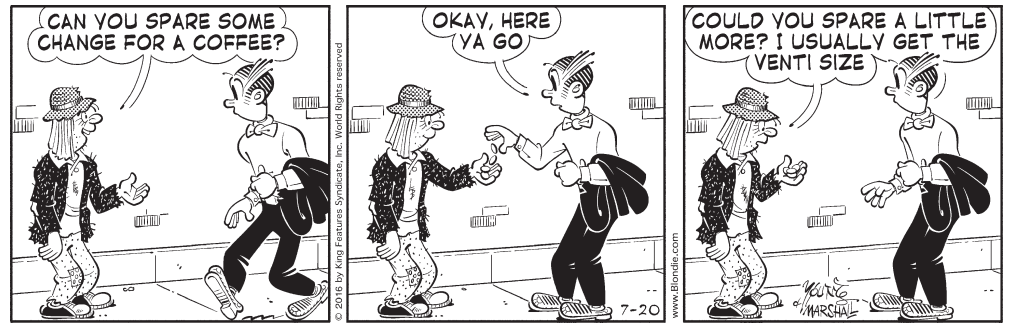
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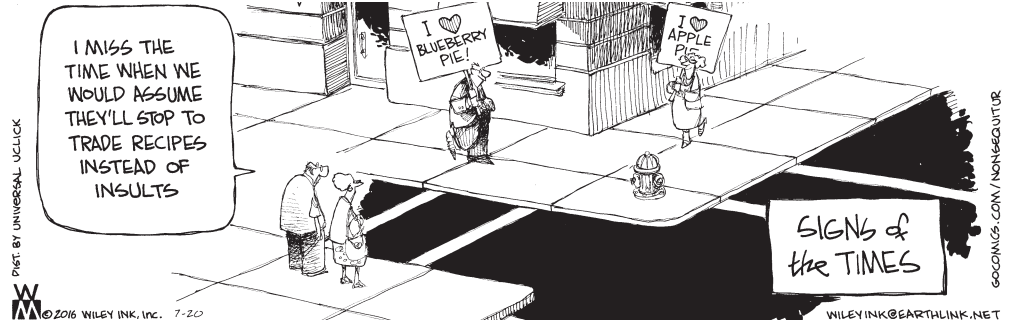
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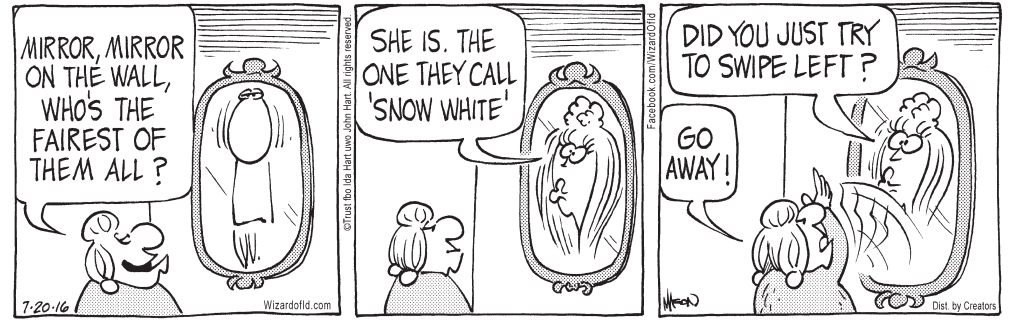
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