

Closed off robot husband

Dear Annie: I am a Care Bear, and my husband is a cyborg. What I mean is that I get emotional from almost anything. I once cried during a commercial for laundry detergent. I know it sounds cliched, but I love happy endings, puppies, babies, the color pink and — of course — talking about my feelings.

My husband, on the other hand, is pretty much the exact opposite. I've never seen him cry. He barely talks to his siblings (although they're a little nutty, but that's a different letter). He is constantly on his phone either working or playing solitaire. And getting him to open up is like pulling teeth. Actually, I think pulling teeth might be easier, because he wouldn't have to talk.

We have two kids, and he is great with them. He is super engaged and talks to them on their level. Maybe he feels safe because they won't judge him.

He's not mean or neglectful to me. He says "I love you." But I can't help feeling frustrated when I love talking about feelings and emotions and he doesn't. How do I connect with a man who is so closed off? — *Funshine Bear*

Dear Funshine: Opposites attract — and then drive each other nuts. But with effort, you and your husband can use your differences as a source of

Dear Annie



By **Annie Lane**

Creators Syndicate Inc.

strength and balance. The key is good communication, even if your communication styles are totally different.

I would say your husband is more Secret Bear than cyborg. He has feelings. He just expresses them non-verbally, through actions — such as spending time with the kids or putting his arm around you when a Tide ad tugs at your heartstrings. Try to recognize these as legitimate expressions of love.

When you'd really like him to talk about something, let him know. Don't be judgmental or accuse him of never opening up, as this would only make him withdraw further. Instead, put those Care-a-Lot skills to work and articulate how you feel.

Dear Annie: A few weeks ago, my boyfriend and I went to a beach bonfire for my cousin's 15th birthday. We enjoyed chatting and catching up

with the family. Everything was going great until I had to use the bathroom and, unfortunately, the only bathroom in sight was a port-a-potty.

I hate port-a-potties. They're disgusting. I don't even care if I find a freshly placed port-a-potty and I am the first person to use it. I still think they're full of germs, and I get incredibly grossed out.

Anyway, after weighing my options and realizing that I could not hold it until I got home, my fate was sealed. I was going to have to use the port-a-potty.

I asked my boyfriend to walk over with me, and he didn't get what the big deal was but agreed to walk with me. I told him that because he — as a man — doesn't always have to get near the seat, he will never understand the trauma that is the portable toilet.

Why is this such an issue for me? I'm not germophobic or obsessed with cleanliness, but I can't stand these things. — *Reluctant Reliever*

Dear Reluctant: I've never seen anyone heading into a port-a-potty looking especially jazzed, but clearly it bothers you more than most. Your best bet is to be prepared. When you know you're going to be in a situation where you might have to use a port-a-potty, pack some hand sanitizer, toilet paper and toilet seat liners in your bag.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). At its simplistic essence, life is energy. The energy you invest in a project is your life. Is this project worthy of the attention you're giving? How will its successful completion make a difference for you and others?

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Many disparate elements converge and you'll suddenly have a cohesive plan in your head. Put it on paper now while it's fresh, because you'll want to look back at the thought process that started you on this journey.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). When people can't bear self-scrutiny they blame others. You don't see the point, though. You take full responsibility for whatever part is yours, however small it may be, and gain all the learning you can from that.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). When you're working there are rules. And when you're just playing around there are even more rules, because the potential for getting hurt or hurting others is even greater in a seemingly unstructured playground.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your first idea will be pretty good, but it's not until you reach idea 10 or 12 that you'll get to the next level, which is sheer gold. Are you willing to keep generating new ideas until you break through?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You weren't expecting to be finished with a job early, and yet you'll hit a point today where it seems to be dragging on beyond what is reasonable. This warrants a thoughtful communication with the others involved.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Remember that bruise that mysteriously appeared? Emotional bruises also can have vague origins, but that doesn't make them hurt any less or show up

fainter. If it's sore, assume there's a good reason and baby it until it heals.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're joyfully aware of the best that's in you. That doesn't make you clueless or Pollyanna about the rest. You know of your darker potentials. But why focus on the shadows, when there's so much to do in the light?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). A figure from your past will be a figure in your future. There's a reason you parted and a reason you reconnected. Just be careful not to let nostalgia cloud your vision.

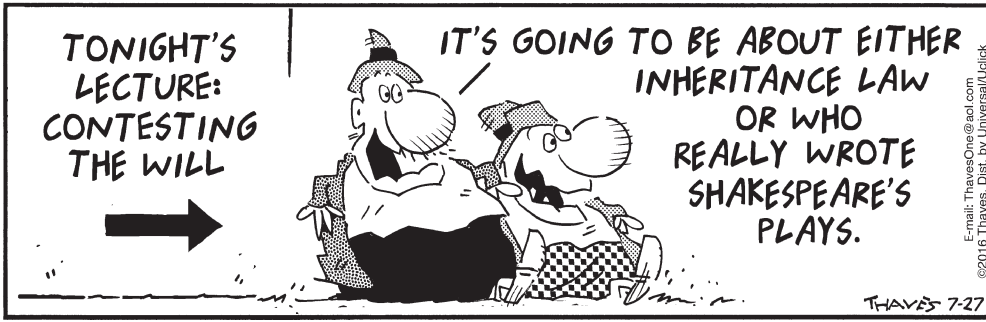
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You want a broader repertoire, and you're willing to put in the practice time to get it. This isn't going to come together overnight, but if you work on it each day you'll soon have something very impressive.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Ask the others how they're doing and you'll suddenly feel pretty good about your own baggage. The mere newness and novelty of another person's problems seems to subtract pounds from your own.

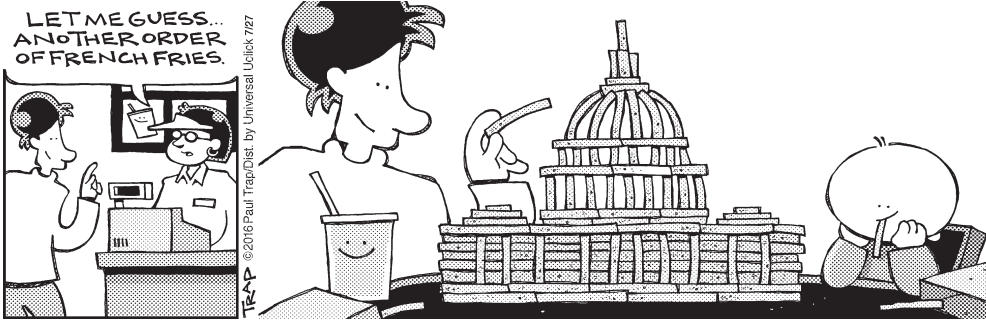
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). One way to stop a torturous temptation from having power over you is to give into it. The other methods will include you going far out of your way to avoid even having to look at or think about the thing.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 28). Domestic improvements will align your head and heart. You'll find new ways to relate to your loved ones and build better relationships all year long. A short trip at the end of the year will favorably alter your destiny. The financial highs will come with hard work and shrewd decisions in October, November and May. Capricorn and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 16, 20, 48 and 33.

FRANK AND ERNEST



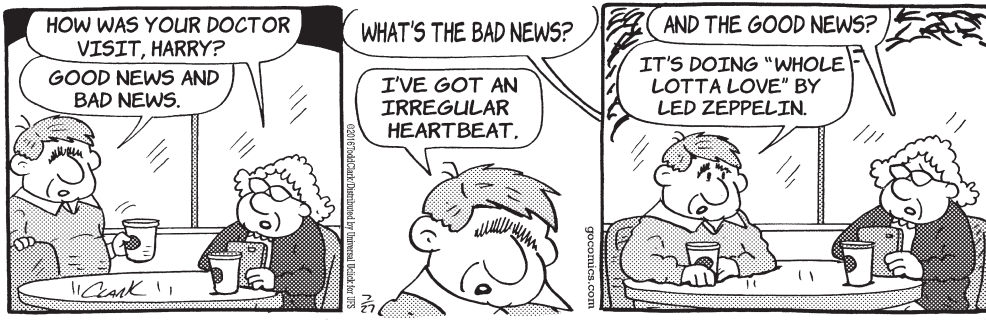
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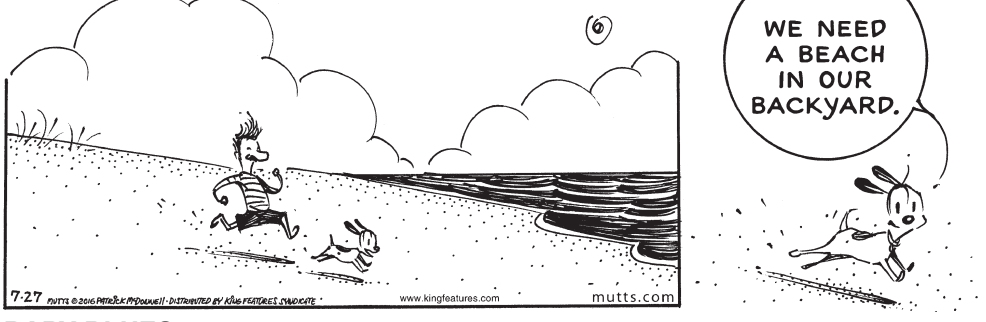
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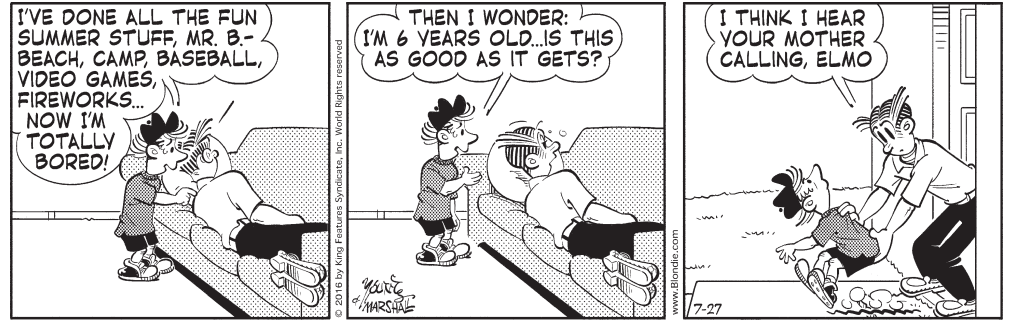
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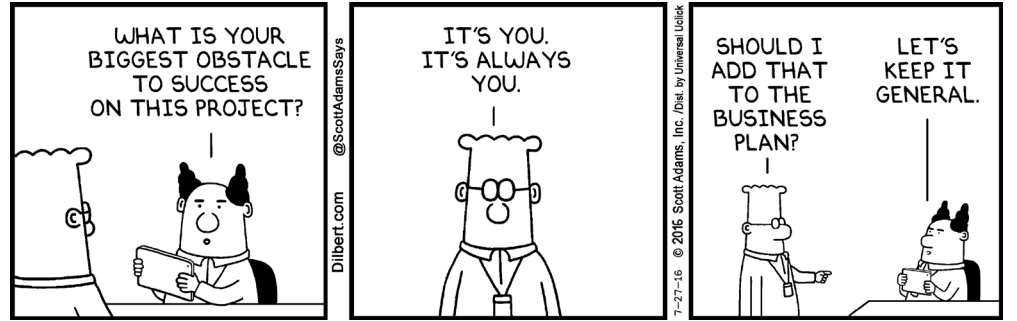
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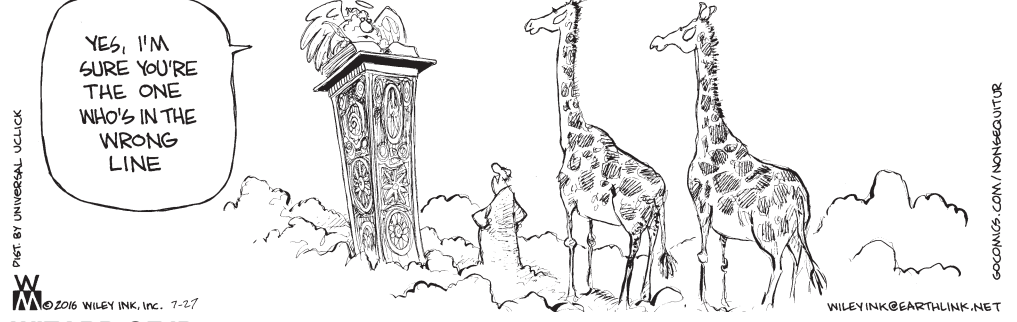
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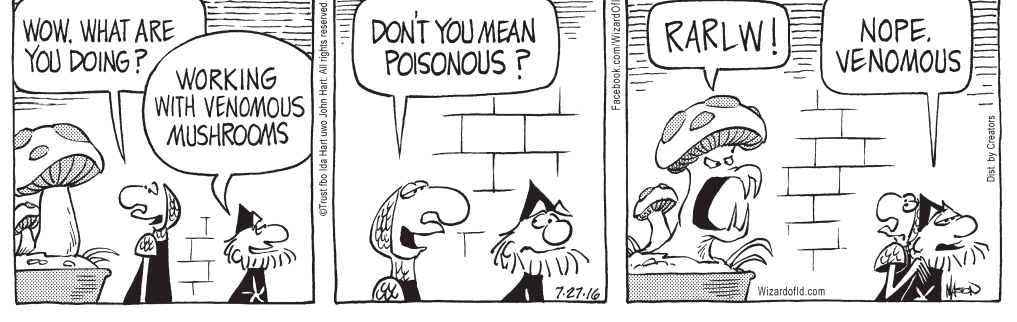
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