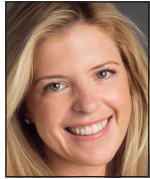


Spreading germs around

Dear Annie: We have an “open office” format, so during cold and flu season, we’re pretty much always passing around something or other. My co-worker “Dana” keeps getting sick with colds, the flu, sinus infections, etc., and I’ve noticed that Dana seems to be patient zero for the rest of us. She comes in with the sniffles, and a week later, we’re all dropping like flies.

Another thing I’ve noticed is that she doesn’t wash her hands after using the restroom at work. I’ve also seen her sneeze into her hands. She uses hand sanitizer at her desk, but I don’t see how that can get rid of all the germs properly. I’m so grossed out. I want to say something to her, but I don’t want to sound judgmental. Is there any tactful way to encourage her to be more hygienic and more careful about not spreading germs? Or should I just start wearing surgical masks? I’d appreciate some help here. — *Sanitizing My Desk*

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Dear Sanitizing: There are some solutions short of wearing a hazmat suit to work. For one, talk to someone in your human resources department. If people are constantly out sick, it’s no good for your employer’s bottom line. The company should promote workplace cleanliness and employee health, perhaps by sending out a companywide memo with tips on how not to spread illness. If Dana keeps up her germ-factory ways, I do not think it would be out of line for you to talk to her privately. Perhaps lead in by giving her the benefit of the doubt. Say, for example, “I’ve noticed you often use hand sanitizer at your desk. I didn’t know this myself until recently, but that doesn’t actually eliminate a lot of the germs.” Though you really shouldn’t have to tell her how to properly wash her hands, it wouldn’t hurt to mention that she should use clean running water and lather, scrub and rinse her hands thoroughly. With any luck, you’ll be able to wash

your hands of this situation.

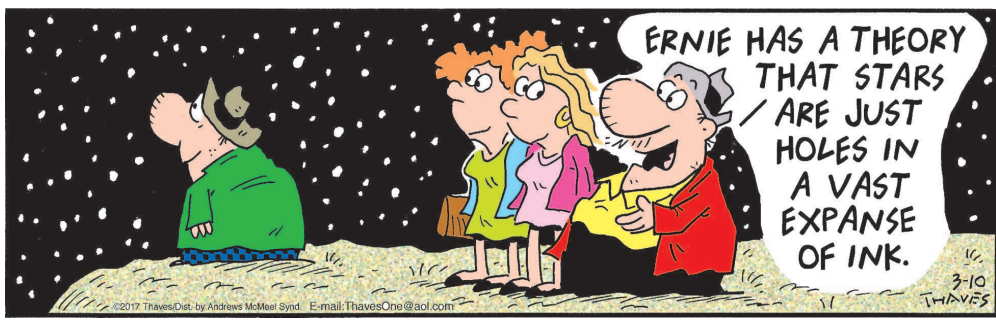
Dear Annie: “Slapped in the Face” wrote to you about how her husband had wanted her to meet his new sweetie. You told her that he must be “miserable” to try to bring her down that way, because “the happier a person is the more he or she wants others to be happy.”

He isn’t necessarily “miserable.” He’s probably just egotistical, self-centered and clueless. My ex wanted me and the children to congratulate him on the wonderful new life he was going to have and was actually surprised and angry when we didn’t.

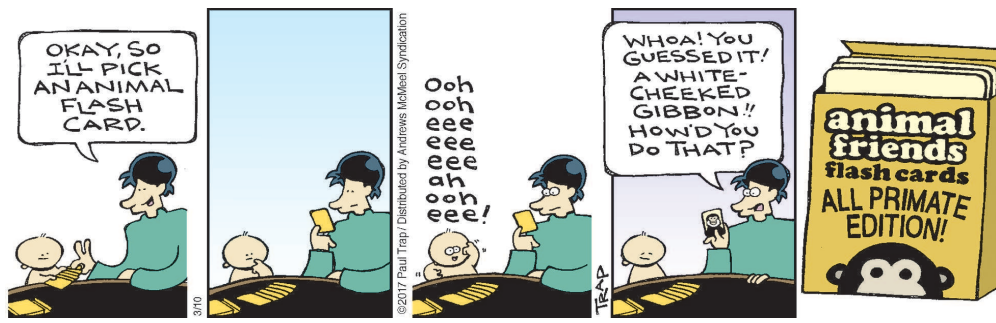
Though “Slapped” won’t believe it yet, she’s the one who will have the wonderful new life she can’t imagine now. She’s learning something valuable about herself. Meanwhile, he’s going to make the same old mistakes because he won’t have to learn. — *Burlington, Vt.*

Dear Burlington: Congratulations on the fact that your louse of an ex is no longer in your life. “Slapped” is indeed better off, too.

FRANK AND ERNEST



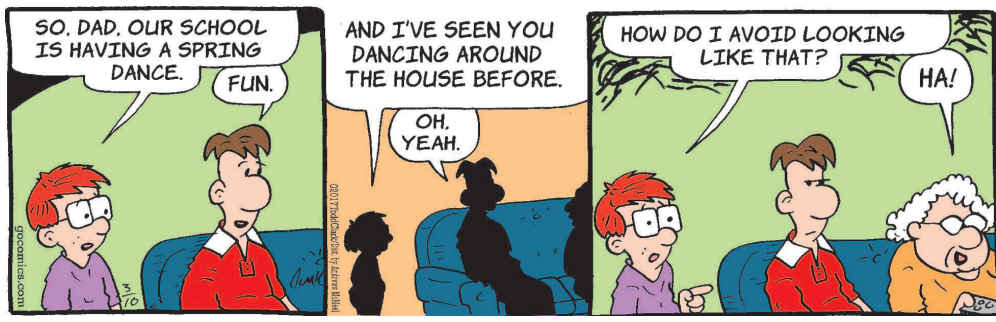
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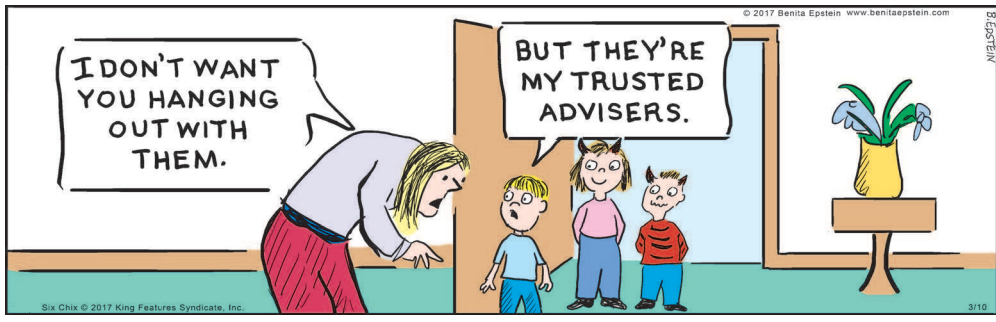
PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



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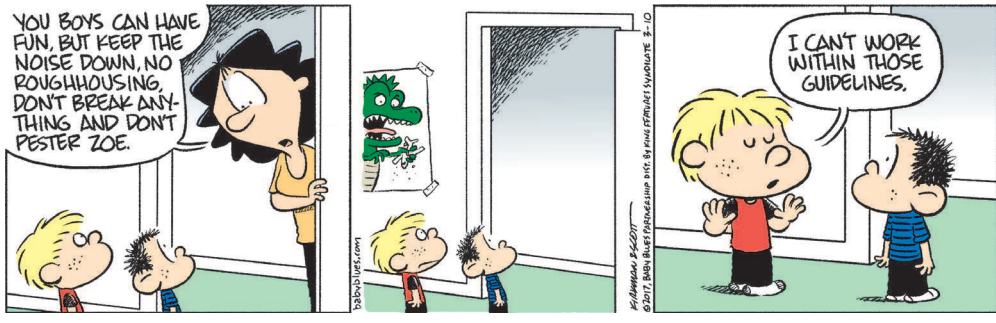
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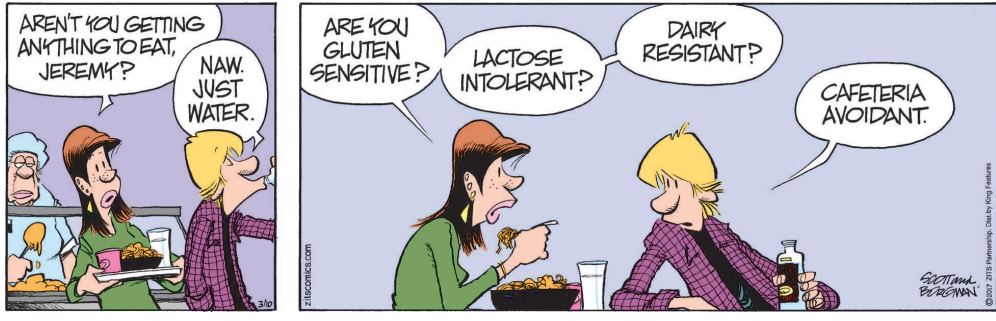
MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The perfect thing for you now is a system that allows you to operate freely within it — even break out of it — because you know it's a loose guide and not a stone tablet gospel.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The key to being “on” in the moment when it matters may be in being “off” before it matters. All that you do to rest and recharge today will count toward next week's success.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll deal with the difficult people again, because you're often the only one in your group who can. Just remember, the loudmouths are usually trying to project a bigger sense of themselves to hide deep insecurities.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The meditator aims to master the mind by emptying it. Logically, it would seem that fewer thoughts would be easier to manage. Another, perhaps easier, way to have fewer thoughts will be to lose yourself in your favorite activity.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It's like you're given a key today — just one, but one is all you need. The same key will open the door to a few different opportunities, some of them most enjoyable, some terrible. So go with caution, testing things out along the way.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). When you think you understand but don't really, it's worse than knowing you're clueless. The latter is an invitation for learning, the former an invitation for mistakes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Stick too close to the tradition, routine or plan and the result will have less life in it than the zingy unpredictability of your inspired whims. Surround yourself with people who get this.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The Zen proverb says, “The wild geese do not intend to cast their reflections. The water has no mind to receive their images.” Unintended validation, beauty and grace will be part of your day.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). In all matters of life, from choosing a mate to choosing a teacher (home-repair person, tour guide, babysitter or any role at all that needs filling in your life), what matters is not that it's a perfect match but that it's a good fit.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). No matter how much money a person has, there will always be options that cost more. So don't wish for wealth as you face today's financial decisions; wish for wisdom.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). To seek “the” truth may be a waste of the day, as there are thousands of informational bits to sort through, held together by only the most tenuous threads of the stuff. Instead seek “your” truth (also difficult, but less so).

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your fortunes will be augmented when you are sweet to your family for an hour, unless you are too busy: Then your fortunes will be augmented when you are sweet to your family for two hours.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 11). You don't have to know your way; the map is in you and the map is you. Friends will inspire you to travel. Family will provide you with a money-making opportunity so you can do it right. Next month: Rethink; revamp; remodel. June brings a fork in the road and a big decision, but don't stress; revert back to sentence one. Aquarius and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 4, 44, 48 and 1.

BLONDIE

