# How can I get out of a slump?

Dear Annie: My husband of 44 years passed away from complications of Alzheimer's disease. I cared for him at home for years. He was 79 when he passed away; I was 71. We were extremely close and had a wonderful life together.

Sometime after my husband's passing, a friend whom I had dated in high school got in touch with me. He asked whether he could drive over for a short visit. I finally consented. He is divorced and has two children. We became friends again, and he visited again. He called, texted and was very attentive overall. I met his children and vis-

ited with them. But then he wouldn't call for days, even though he said he would. When I didn't hear, I was genuinely concerned. Eventually, I found out he was drinking. As time passed, his behavior changed. He became critical of little things, insinuating that he liked me better when I didn't have my glasses on or commenting that he noticed that my arthritis caused me not to get around as well, etc.

In the meantime, he had a mini

stroke, fell and broke his ribs, and fell off his four-wheeler and broke his hip. He also ended up in the hospital twice last year because of his drinking. He told me that he

loved me and always would. One day, he told me he was

**DEAR** 

**ANNIE** 

Annie Lane

beginning to feel smothered by our relationship and felt it was best we not talk so much. I was shocked. I had given him a Bible and devotional books and invested time in him hoping he would get his life straightened

He wants to keep staying in contact. It makes me uncomfortable, and

I feel that he lies often, as I have caught him in several lies. He said he didn't want to lose me. I think he is narcissistic and thinks it's fine to call when he wants to, and I don't think he wants to have to be there for me when I want to talk. I see a pattern with him. He does it to others, too.

I can't believe I didn't see what type of person he is. What can I do to get myself out of the slump I am in? I have had other men invite me to go places, but I have no desire to date.

I did see a counselor for a while, but she has retired. She used to say he's "a drunk" who won't get any better until he does something about his drinking.

I do have many friends and am fortunate, although lately, I have withdrawn from others. I know this is not good or normal. What do you suggest? — Feeling Guilty and Remorseful

Dear Feeling: Until he gets his life straightened out, this man is not fit to be anyone's romantic partner — especially not yours, as you seem to have the type of personality to want to care for and fix broken people. Though that desire is admirable in and of itself, it steps perfectly in time with the dance of addiction. You always rescue him, and he always gives you more rescue missions. That you're withdrawing from others is a sign of codependence. You need to quit the relationship cold turkey.

Force yourself to spend time with friends, even if you don't feel like it yet. If counseling was helpful to you, find a new counselor. The good news is that you seem to have a handle on the situation already. Now you just need to start steering.

### TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It will be a pretty ordinary day until you suddenly get a very palpable feeling of generosity. You'll give something that matters to you greatly. You'll give something that makes a difference.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You might have to root around for something to look forward to. It's sad that you have to look this hard; then again, your options will be better because you made the effort.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're not always your own best babysitter. Enlist the care of others. The influence of someone you admire will keep you accountable to goals that would not be reached otherwise.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You want a place that shines from ceiling to floor. Bonus benefit: With each sweeping gesture of the broom, cobwebs of your mind will be simultaneously whisked away.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Fix it. Fix it! It needs fixing and you're the one to do it. "How?" is the question. You won't know the answer, but your sincere intention is nearly enough to fix it all.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You are super-capable. You have more energy than others, and you don't mind doing extra work. This is why you become the superstar of your group today, a well-earned scenario.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You identify with a group, but not in all regards. Differentiate. If you align yourself falsely, it will cause problems down the line. Clarify. Take a

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). If you were wrong, it only means that you are wiser

today than you were yesterday. You'll accept it and move accordingly. Like a drummer settling into a favorite beat, you'll hit your groove

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It's been suggested that the present moment is all we ever have. But isn't that a lot of pressure, really? What about the less impulsive people around who need time to process and

frame things? CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You don't want to interrupt people, and yet you're going to have to. Your message is important. Your purpose is strong. Go ahead and say what you need to say.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You've a need to gripe about what's been bothering you. Once you get it off of your mind, the stress will be over. The key is speaking to the right people — discreet people who won't give it another thought.

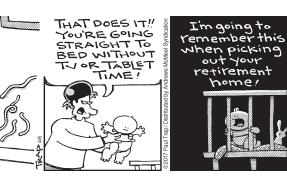
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It's said that nothing considered is lost. If you thought about it, it had an effect. It meant something. And the same goes for the art you made that didn't have the intended impact. It still did something. Move on and grow.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (April 7). To some, silence is a hobby. Consider it yours and this year will have a magical tint to it. There is something so wonderful about what you find in your own mind this solar return. You will do the thing that the others can't. In June you will be the reason a whole system is changed. In May it becomes about something else. Cancer and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 30, 4, 7 and 17.

### **FRANK AND ERNEST**









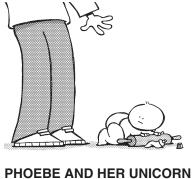
SO, ABOUT THAT CAR LOAN,

MR. SHERWOOD ... )

**BLONDIE** 







Marigold! Have you read the ending of-









THIS IS MY COUSIN STEVE. HE'S A MODEL FOR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC.



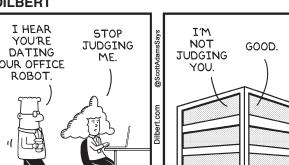


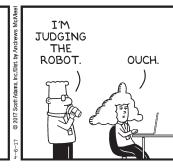








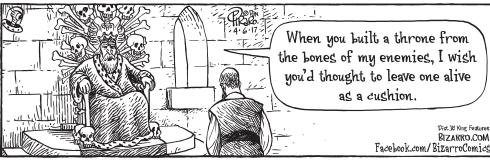




# **SIX CHIX**



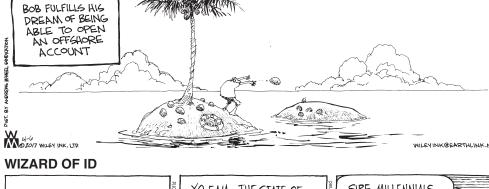
## **BIZARRO**



# **MUTTS**



**NON SEQUITUR** 



# **BABY BLUES**







# HOVER











### **ROSE IS ROSE**



