

Searching for the way

Dear Annie: I am a 63-year-old retired librarian. I divorced when my children were very young (4 and 6) and never remarried. I attempted a bit of dating, but for a variety of reasons, things never worked out.

My daughter, now 29, has recently completely alienated me because I can't find my "own way." Our often-prickly relationship took a turn for the worse when we both decided to relocate to Colorado in the upcoming year. I have lived in Colorado and New Mexico several times but have always come back (reluctantly) to the East Coast to address crises with both my daughter and my son (addictions, boyfriend problems, college graduations, etc.). In addition, my aging parents in Michigan have needed help in recent years.

I'll admit I seem to be living out of my car, as I have given up several residences to travel to where I've been needed. I am not happy about this situation and am trying to extricate myself from all of my family's messes. But why is my daughter so furious with me? She has her own life and is engaged to be married. I firmly intend to have a house

and pets and a so-called life, but I am not a wealthy woman and cannot just snap my fingers and manufacture a lovely house with a white picket fence.

She won't even speak to me! It's hurtful, and she is selfish. Her tunnel vision is so bad that she can't see that I am dissatisfied and not joyous about my present state. Both of my children seem to think I chose this solitary life. Believe me, if I could again snap my fingers, I would choose a far different life. What in the heck should I say or do? Thanks in advance for any advice you can provide. — *Befuddled*

Dear Befuddled: If you've ever been on an airplane, then you've heard a flight attendant announce that in the event that oxygen masks drop down, secure your own mask before assisting the person next to you, even if that person is your child. It's a tried-and-true metaphor for the importance of self-care. For now, forget (as best you can) the problems with your daughter. Focus on getting your own life in order.

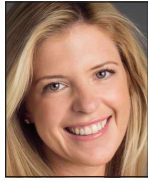
Put roots down where you feel you could flourish in your golden years. If you like Colorado, stay

there. If you'd rather be closer to your parents, move to Michigan. After decades of hard work, you shouldn't have to live out of your car. Perhaps you could find part-time work as a librarian. (There are several job search websites tailored specifically to the needs of retired people looking for part-time work. Try Retired Brains or Maturity Works.) I have a feeling that your relationship with your daughter will improve once you improve your relationship with yourself.

Dear Annie: I believe that you meant well, but your advice to "Tea Party Planners," who wanted to note the charge for the tea party in their invitation, was way off. You do not charge to entertain your friends! If they cannot afford to host the tea party, they should find other ways to gather with friends. Please rethink your position. — *Tea'd Off*

Dear Tea'd: Their question was whether to give notice about the fee in the invitation, not whether they should ask for payment in the first place. So I stand by my reply that it's better that the invitees know ahead of time — better than surprising them with a bill. That said, I hear your point. Charging friends for a luncheon is not my cup of tea, either.

DEAR ANNIE

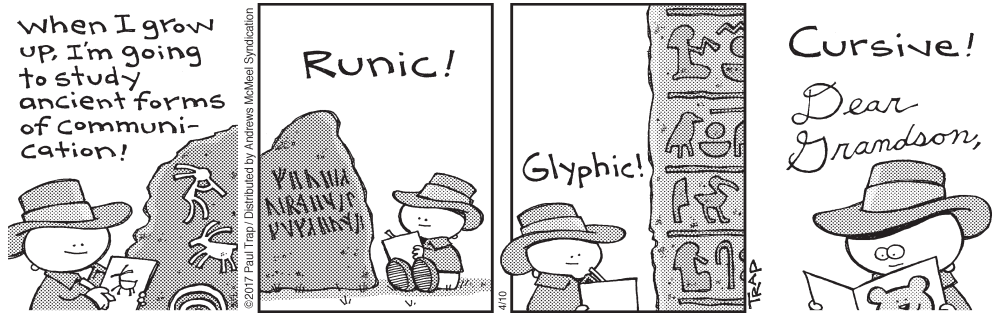


Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

FRANK AND ERNEST



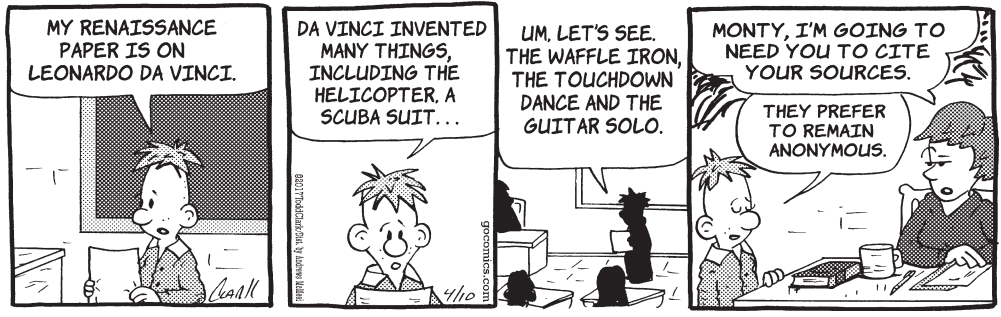
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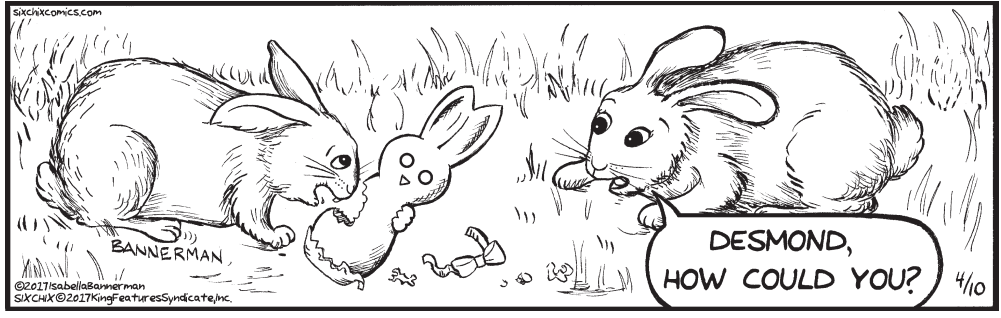
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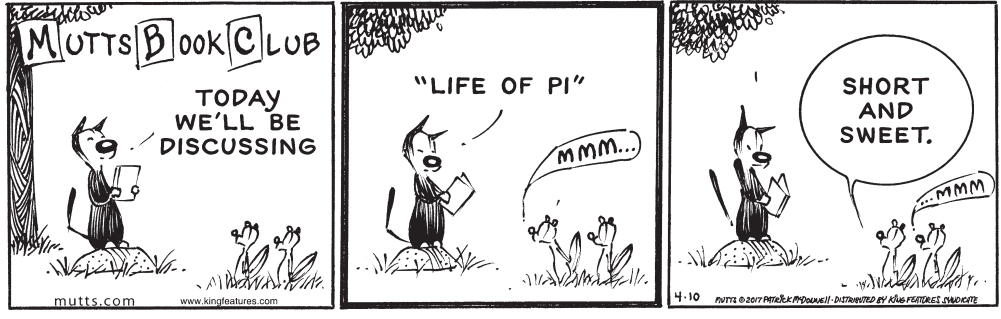
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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Don't ask other people for answers today because the answers are not in other people. Seek solitude. Be a monk for a few hours. "A monk is a man who is separated from all and who is in harmony with all." — Evagrius Ponticus

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Learn the history and you'll understand the factors affecting the present situation a lot better. Also, the ones who are in the know will be impressed and perhaps flattered by your curiosity.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll use your free-wheeling spontaneity to capture the attention and interest of your intended. After that, though, self-discipline and organization are needed. Relationships thrive with structure.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Maybe you're the universal favorite child of the day. People around you will seem to be working just for you. Or maybe it's just that your needs are in alignment with what others want most to give.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The concerns of humans may be an infinitesimal point in the immensity of the universe, but that doesn't keep them from feeling like a large weight to one person. Bottom line, if it's a big deal to you, it's a big deal.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Since you know that when you say yes your hyper-vigilance will kick in and you'll give your very all to the thing, you're very careful about what you say yes to today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It will be rather easy to see the dim shadows of life this morning. Once you change the channel, everywhere you look you today you'll see life happening in a kind of glad, rejoicing action.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). An emotion is like a sound: It's an internal interpretation of an external vibration. The vibration is not the feeling. Feelings don't exist around us. They are made inside us and can be remade there, too.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Time to refer to your role models. If you are not moved to do so, it's a sign that you may need to add a new role model. Search high and low for inspiration. P.S.: Your role model does not have to be accessible or even alive.

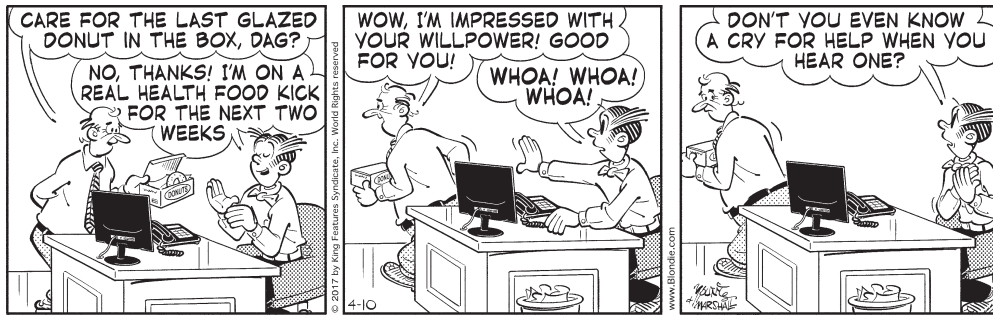
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It's good to know that change is coming, as you dislike having change sprung on you at the last second. The excellent communicators who let you know what to expect will win your loyalty.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're not waiting for another person to make the situation better. You sense that most of the changes that matter will come from you. You roll up your sleeves and get busy.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Like a laptop featuring an on-screen spinning ball, information overload could have you feeling hot and confused. What helps is a way of categorizing and processing this. Use these two categories to start: "Actionable" or "Not actionable."

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (April 11). Don't worry about labeling your pursuits of the next 10 weeks. Your interest may seem scattered and random, but something remarkable is coming together here. In June you'll get a clear plan and your project will grow to the perfect beautiful size. The same love affair will take many forms this solar return. Leo and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 20, 33, 28 and 15.

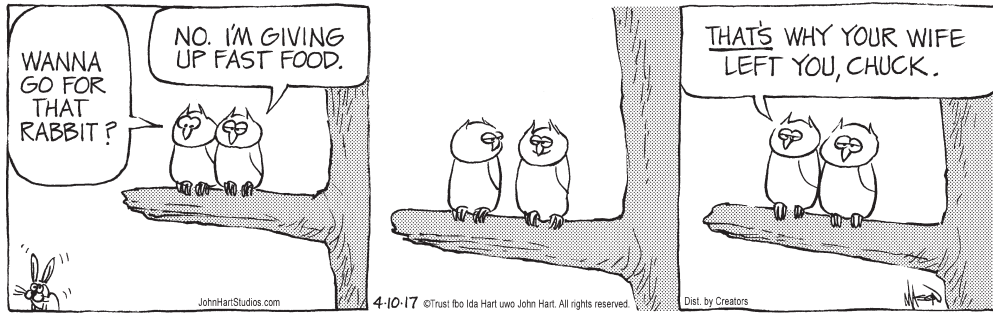
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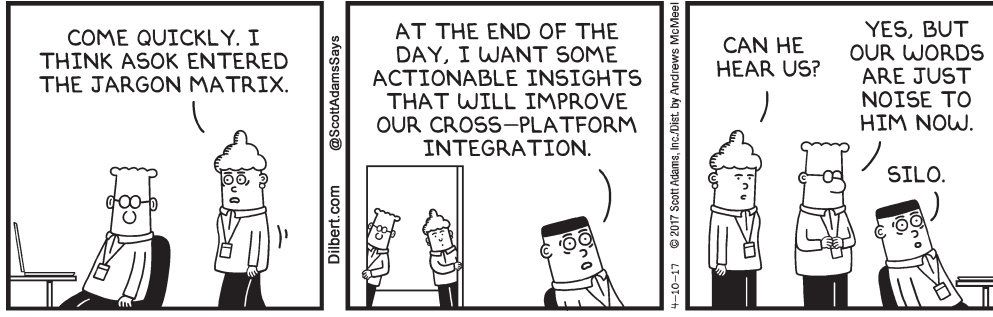
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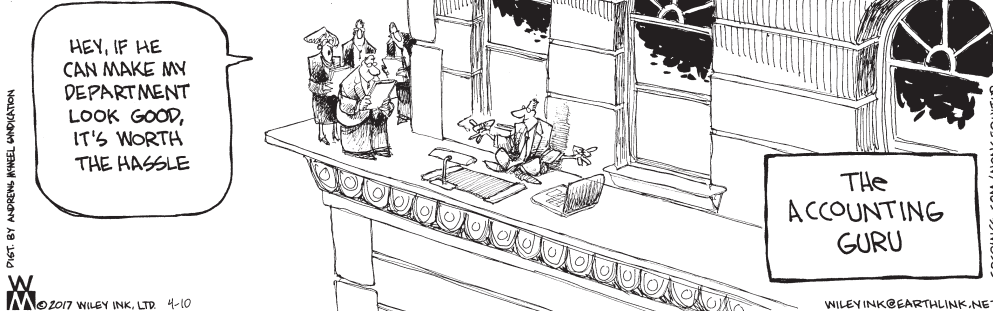
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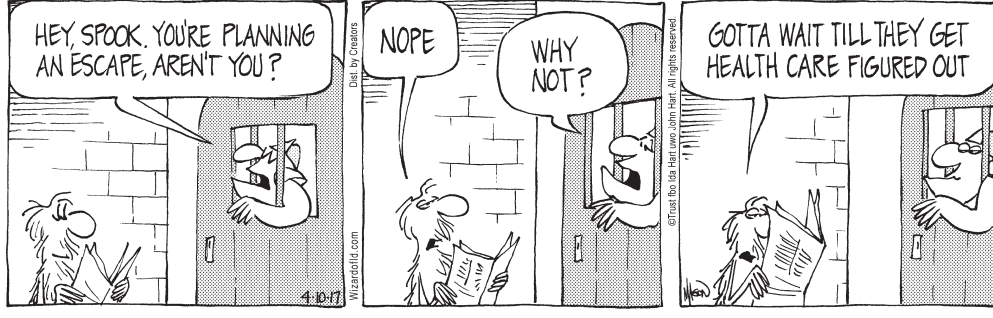
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