

Her husband's a hoarder

Dear Annie: My husband loves to read your advice, but when it comes to my giving him advice, it's a different story. We were married in our early 20s and have stayed married for over 35 years. We don't have very good communication skills.

We have a very cute house on a popular street. A lot of people comment on how nicely it's decorated from the outside. Little do they know that my husband is a hoarder.

I have controlled the main rooms in our house, but he has slowly taken over our basement and garage. The stress of all this stuff is starting to make me feel ill. When I bring it up, he just puts me down any way he can think of to stop the conversation about his hoarding. I definitely have accumulated "stuff," but I don't have a problem getting rid of things.

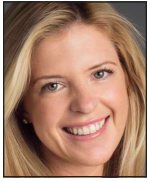
He is a motivated person with other things but has self-medicated every day of our marriage. He has a normal job but is always so stressed out. He has zero motivation to get rid of all the junk because now it's out of control, and he continues to add to the

pile. He spends countless hours in the basement, but nothing ever looks any different.

He has a very controlling personality and temper, so if you get rid of anything (for example, a huge garbage bag full of napkins or empty boxes), he starts slamming doors, yelling and throwing things.

This is causing me to be depressed, angry and desperate. He would never get help for this, so what do I do? — **Bogged Down**

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Dear Bogged Down: Living with clutter can be very unhealthy, both mentally and physically. But understanding the psychology of hoarders might help you find some patience with your husband and sanity for yourself. Hoarding is a symptom of obsessive-compulsive disorder, a condition your husband could have no more control than any physical disorder. Accept that it's not only beyond your control but also beyond his and you'll feel lighter.

Next, reach out to a mental health professional. If your husband refuses to go at first, then

go on your own, as this disorder is impacting your life, too. For more resources, visit the International OCD Foundation's page on hoarding disorder at <https://hoarding.iocdf.org>.

You mentioned that your husband "self-medicates" every day. Assuming that means drinking, I strongly advise you to attend Al-Anon. Find a group in your area at <http://www.al-anon.org>.

Dear Annie: There is a group of senior citizens who meet most days for coffee and a couple of hours of conversation at the local McDonald's. Most do not buy anything except for coffee. There are times when they bring in cookies, cake and other baked goods to share. Because McDonald's sells food, some of us don't feel this is appropriate. Most of them see nothing wrong with this. What are your thoughts? — **Another Senior Citizen**

Dear Another Senior: I think that it's rude to bring in outside food to a dining establishment. But perhaps these folks have an agreement worked out with the restaurant. As long as they're not being raucous and you're not the McDonald's general manager, why worry so much about it?

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). A search is on to fill a slot in your life. You're not interested in finding the perfect person for the job, especially since you've a better probability of finding Big Foot. What you want is a good fit.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The interaction has ups and downs, but overall you enjoy what's going on between you and a certain unpredictable someone. You've quite a few inside jokes, and you'll get some more out of today's zaniness.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). As the right-hand man to your own spirit, you'll need to call out some orders. Break your chains; revolt against your own bullying thoughts; flee the captor that is a limited idea of what you're capable of.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Physical hygiene isn't the only kind that makes an impression in the physical realm. Mental and emotional hygiene are just as (if not more) important. People will sense those first, anyway.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're curious about how you can become more powerful in your own life by having more means at your disposal. This is, of course, not the only or even the main route to influence. In regards to power, love really does conquer all.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've a potent charm, and there will be those afraid to get mixed up with it. They are right to be wary, of course. That which has the potential to affect people greatly should be wielded with the utmost care.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're spiritually ambitious. Reinvention is the heartbeat of your day. There's great effort that goes into constant renewal, but it's like anything. The more you do it, the better you get at it and the more auto-

matic it becomes.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A huge part of parenting in the modern world is taking your children where they need to be when they need to be there, and self-parenting is no difference. Show self-love by getting yourself there on time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You inoculate yourself against the virus of egoism by being in service to those around you. To keep your ego in constant check is to remain connected to the energy of the world.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There's something so expedient and attractive about your usual decisiveness, though today will call for a different approach. Before you take a position, live in the question a while longer.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Attaining your heart's desire will require a different method of payment than money. You'll have the chance to pull together the best gifts you have to offer the others for what you want in return.

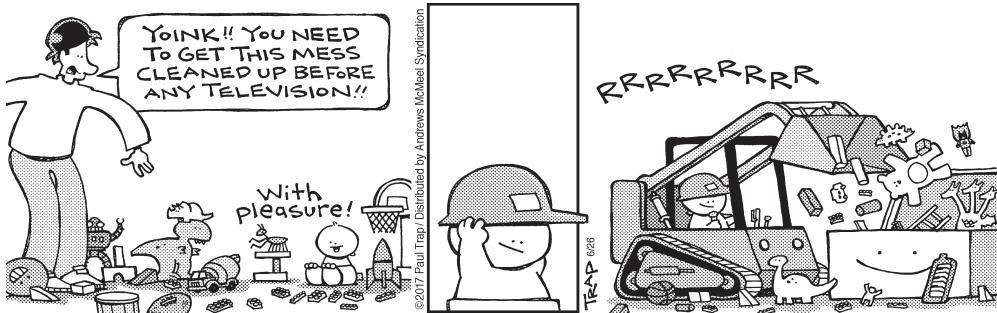
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If you try to use them as your main navigation, logic and ego will steer you wrong; let intuition guide you instead toward what your soul needs (which will be different from what your family wants from you).

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (June 27). Consciousness is among the greatest mysteries of the material world. You'll wrestle philosophies and science, coming up with your own way of viewing your existence — a way that leaves open windows of possibility. Love will lead to business, and business will lead to love. August, November and May are financial highs. Capricorn and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 29, 2, 18 and 5.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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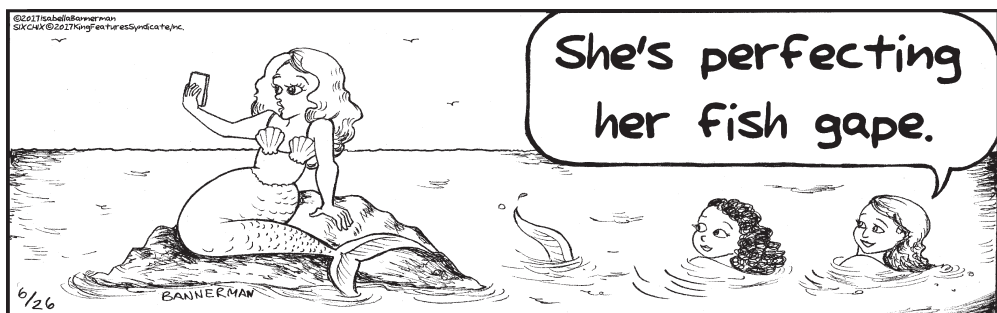
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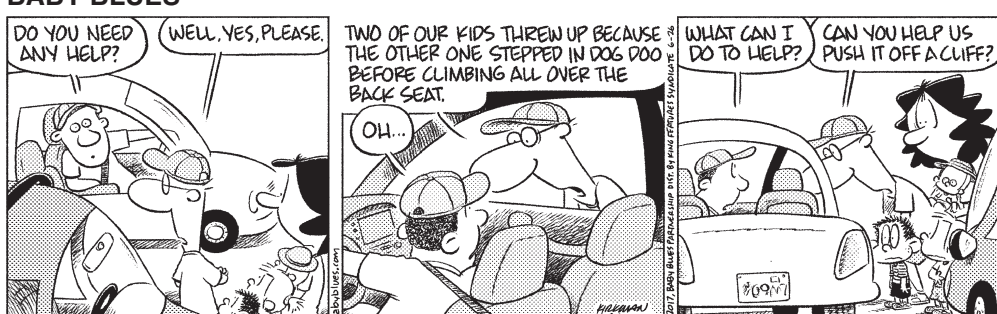
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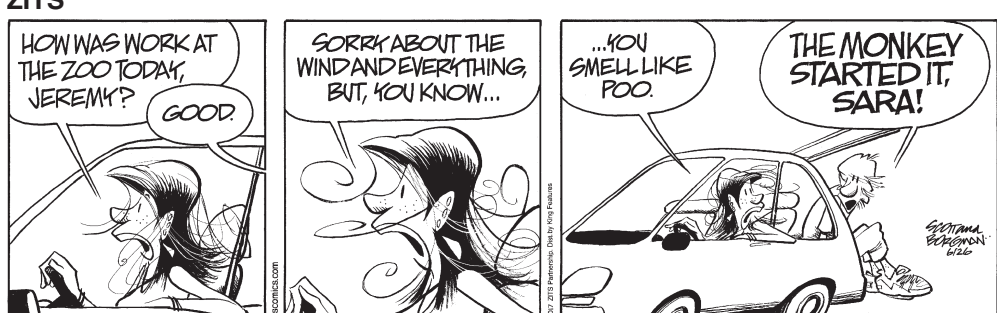
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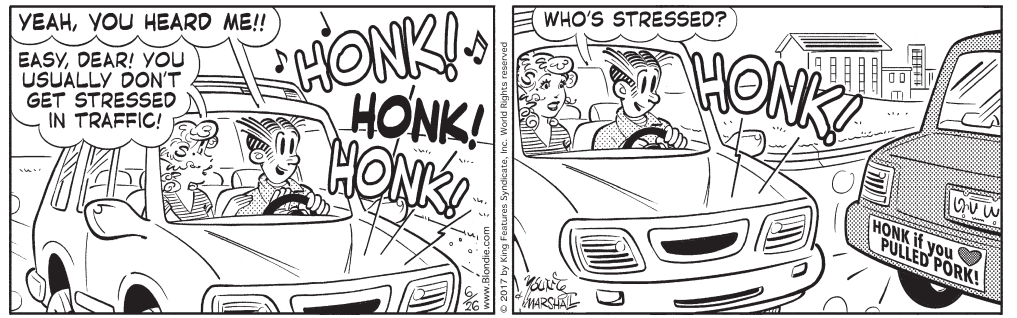
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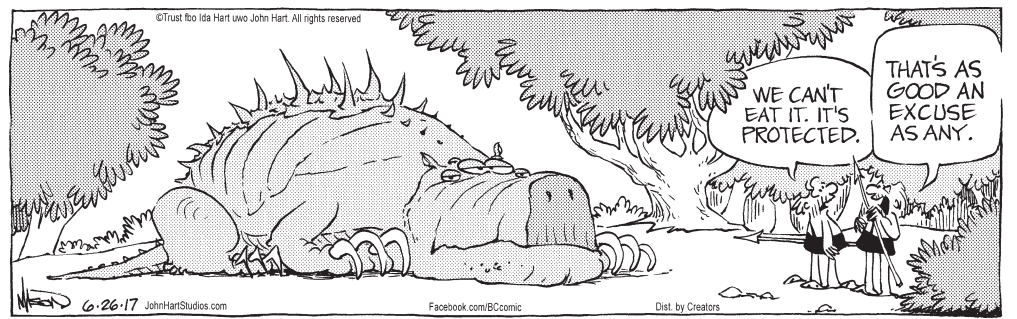
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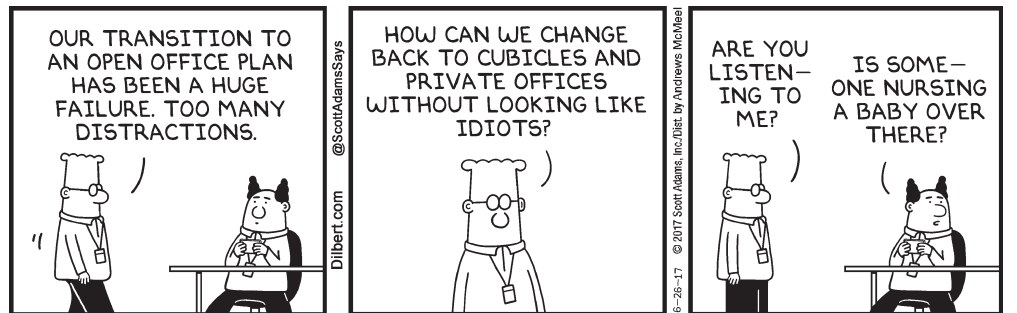
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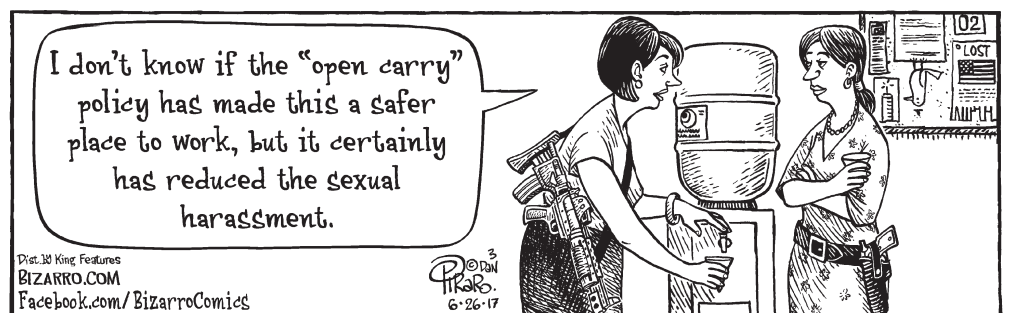
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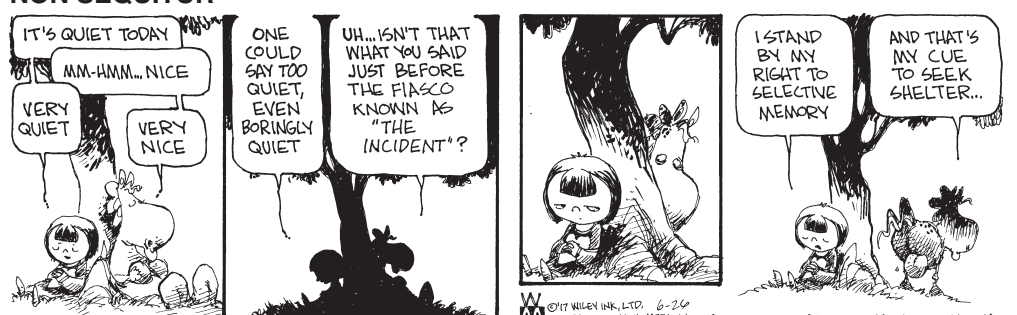
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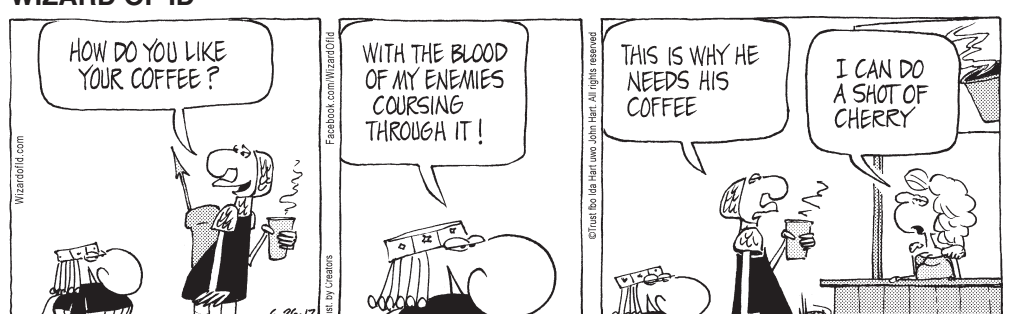
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