

A social media overload

Dear Annie: I love technology. I embrace it and think that it adds value to my life and pushes the human race forward. However, I am not totally sure that my consumption of "social" media and constant use of my phone is a good thing.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

I didn't think of myself as overly addicted to my phone until recently. I saw a piece on "60 Minutes" about how some consumer software companies actively try to get users addicted to their applications via psychological cues, such as notifications and likes. I then read a piece in Fast Company about a freelancer who did a one-month digital detox and saw his productivity skyrocket. Finally, that same week, I read a research piece from Harvard Business Review that essentially said that the more time we spend on Facebook the more it bums us out.

I realized that social media may have been making me feel bad about myself. I don't want to put unnecessary rules and limitations on myself, but I also don't want to live my life staring at a screen and

feeling jealous constantly. How should I handle this? — *Digital Dependence*

Dear Digital Dependence: More evidence surfaces each day of the negative impact our devices are having on us. When technology diminishes our relationships with loved ones and distracts us from the things that truly matter, it's no longer a tool; it's a toxin.

Fortunately, there are a few tricks you can try for cutting down on your Internet use without moving to Walden and throwing your smartphone in the pond. One is to frequently change the way apps are laid out on your phone's screen. This prevents you from going on autopilot and compulsively opening apps without even being conscious of it (a scary but common phenomenon).

Another method is to keep your phone out of sight and out of mind for large chunks of time. Similarly, try turning off all notifications so you're not constantly being lured into checking your accounts. If you need to be on your computer

for work but don't want to get distracted, try a program that blocks social media sites for a set amount of time, such as SelfControl.

And if you're reading this on your phone, put it down and go for a walk.

Dear Annie: I have read many letters to you from mothers-in-law about relationship issues with their daughters-in-law.

Just about every letter I have read contains a laundry list of all the faults these women have, and I'd like to share some needed wisdom with the MILs.

Take a good hard look at yourself, Mom, before you decide to make your displeasure known and alienate this woman whom your son chose as a partner.

Ladies, if you want your son in your life — along with any potential grandkids — wake up. Your boy is a man now; he has made his choice of a mate, and like it or not, you need to make peace with that.

If you can get over yourself, you just may have found a woman who can keep you close to your baby boy. — *Daughter-in-Law Who Is Now a Mother-in-Law*

Dear DILWINAMIL: Words of wisdom. In-laws, take note.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). In certain situations it can be quite risky to say what you think and share your beliefs. But you have ideals you hold dear — things you'll stand for and fall for. Today you're willing to take that risk.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You don't have to invent your whole game. Borrow some of it, too. Other people's knowledge (especially on the topics of courtship, communication and business) will help you direct your relationships successfully.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Start where you are. This is different (and a million times more effective) than thinking from where you are. Thinking is good, but you need to make the start official with an action.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The last thing you want to be is that person who just doesn't feel complete without having all of the attention on them. If you have something to say, you'll say it. Otherwise, your mood is pretty quiet all day.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You are the landlord of your own head. Don't let others rent space there if they aren't going to be good tenants. In other words, your influences need to pay up. If they don't, kick them out of your head and get better influences.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There will be no understanding (nor will there be progress) without the benefit of multiple perspectives. The breakthrough will be induced by zooming way, way in then zooming way, way out.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Is the silence half empty or half full? Probably it's much more than half full. In fact, the silence will overflow with meaning and answers if you're willing to

let it stretch out, unbroken, for a long while.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). St. Ambrose said, "No one heals himself by wounding another." Of course, this was before organ donation was a viable medical technology. Today a small sacrifice will be made for the healing of all involved.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Language makes things happen quickly. Without the right words, today's task will be difficult to pull off. But if you know the right thing to say at the right time, it will be a snap.

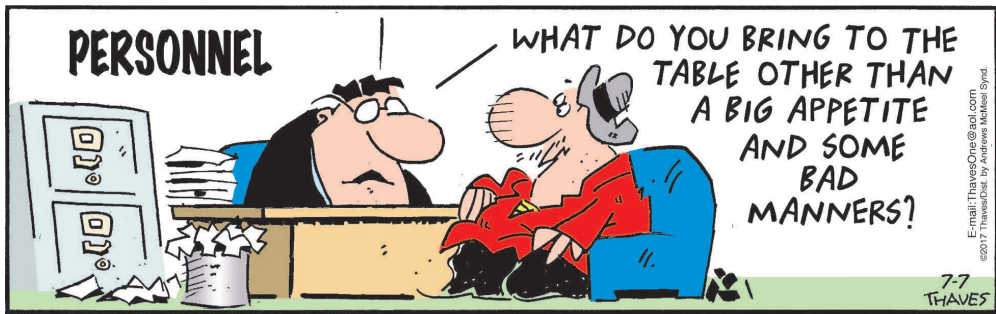
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You rather be successful or popular? Unfortunately, you'll have to choose just one today, because the road to success will take so much focus there will be little time left for the social swirl.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're far too busy to grieve for what you don't have. You love and enjoy what you have. The more you use and appreciate it, the better things get for you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). On a spiritual level, mistakes represent tuition paid. Just as it is in school, a paid tuition is only the minimum needed for entry. It's up to the student to learn the lesson.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (July 8). Your friendly nature pays off in the way of fortunate opportunities that occur because you dared to break the ice with a stranger. There's also a treasure in the form of someone who acknowledges you often, understands you usually and is a faithful companion. Financial highs come in September and March. Taurus and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 33, 39 and 15.

FRANK AND ERNEST



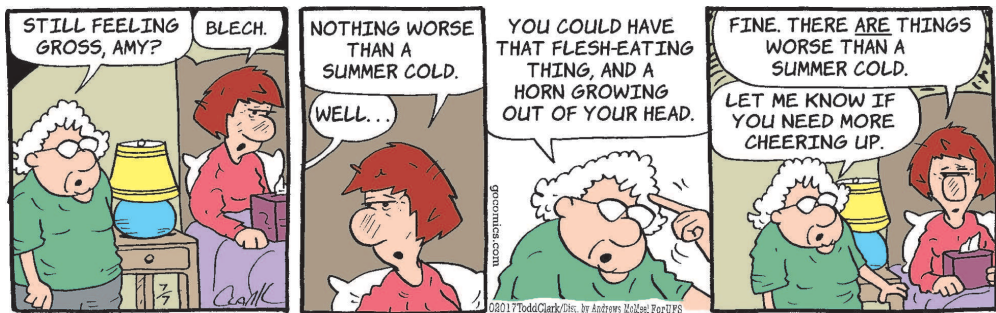
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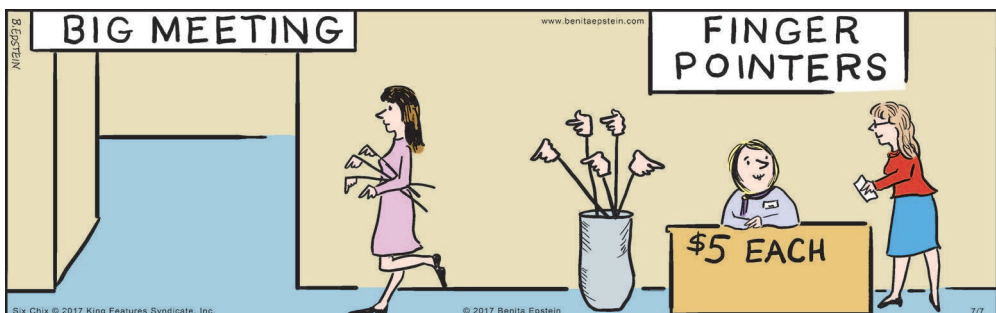
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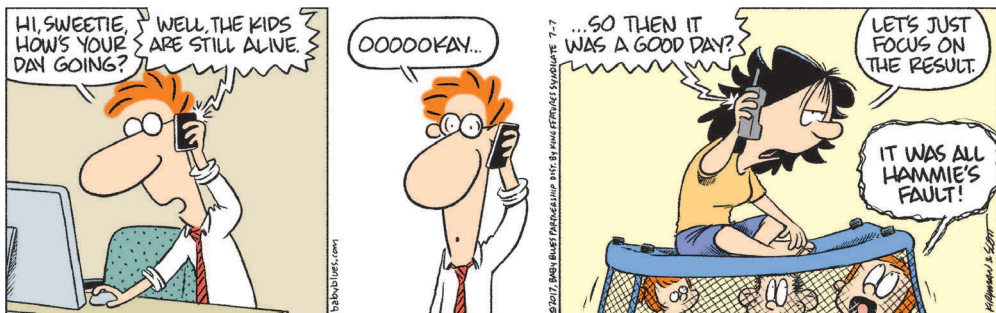
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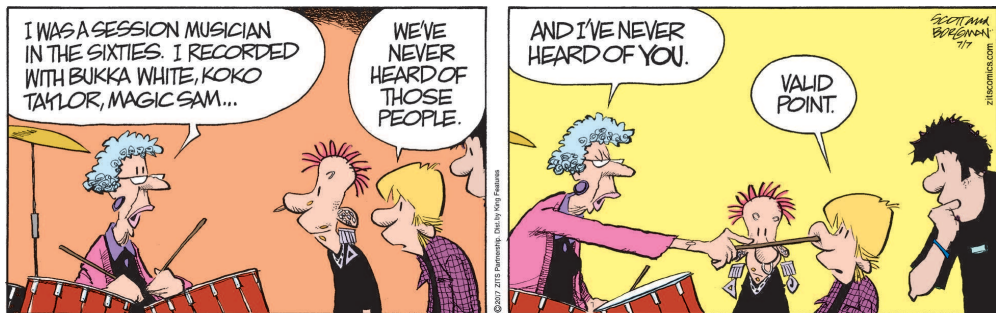
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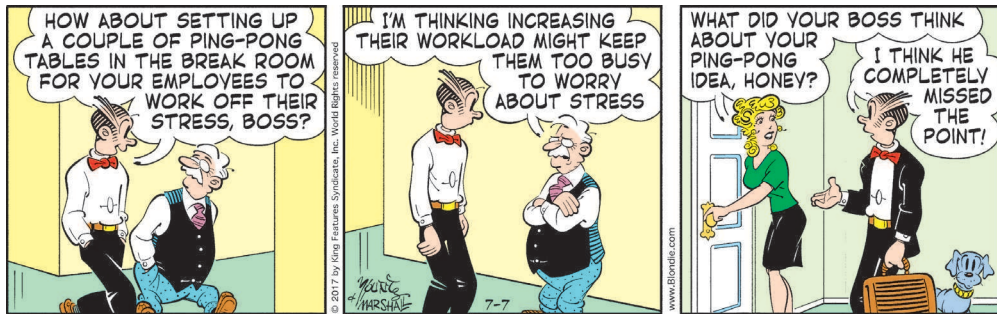
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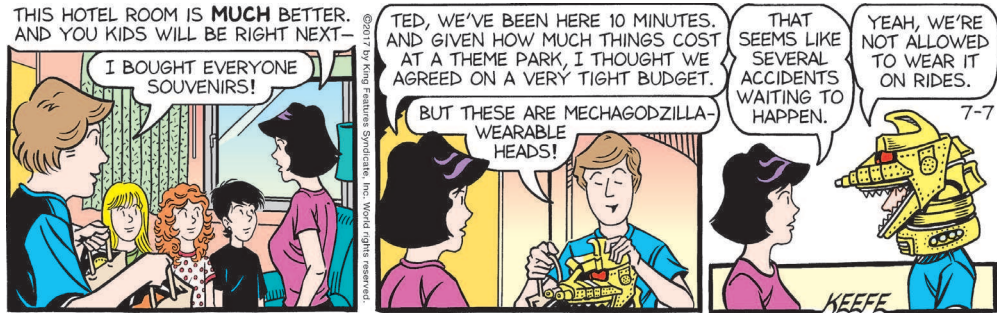
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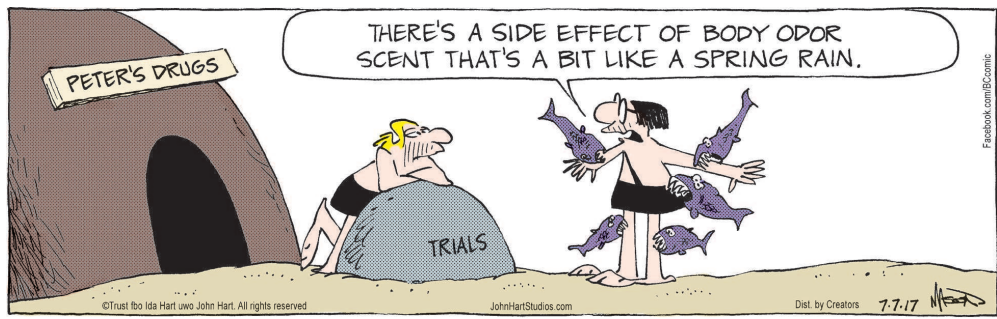
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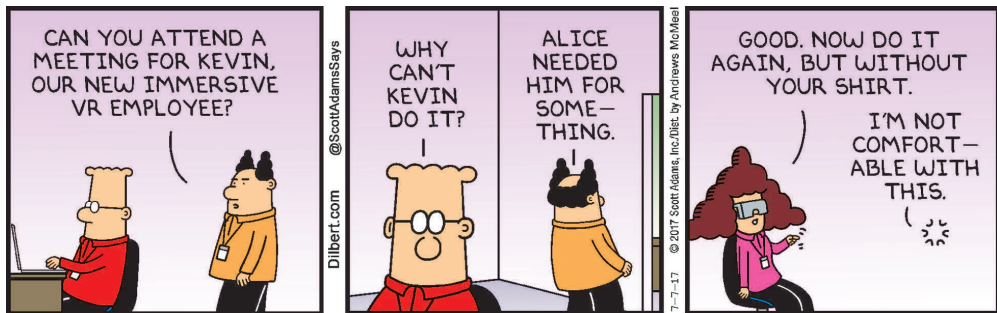
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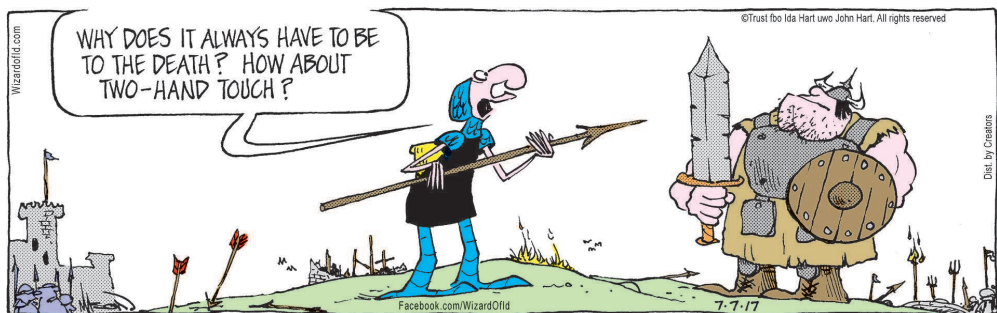
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