

Obsessed with internet stars

Dear Annie: I'm young, and as most young adults do, I have an interest in musicians, authors, artists, etc. For me, especially, I find myself engrossed in YouTube. These are kids who are around my age, 18 or 19. They make funny videos and do ridiculous things that keep me entertained for hours.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

This is where the problem comes in. I found that I'm always drawn to be obsessed with people who are Internet-famous. I feel as though I may be this way because of my lack of actual friends, so I think I understand it. But understanding the problem doesn't necessarily help me sleep at night.

All my life, I've been battling being an obsessive person. As a preteen, I would become enraged if someone pointed out my interest had become an obsession. Now that I'm 18, I've changed my reaction from enraged at the other person to just plain irritated with myself. I feel as if obsessions are taking over my life.

I've tried countless times

and ways to stop myself, such as putting my phone down, disconnecting from the Internet for hours or getting outside to be active, but at the end of the day, I'm still hooked. No matter how hard I try to turn my obsession into a "positive addiction," it always seems to fail, and I'm then sucked into my phone and watching videos again. Every time I try to address the issue with my therapist, I become too embarrassed and change the subject.

I want to help myself because I've become so depressed about these obsessions, but I'm just not sure what to do. — *Obsessed and Tired*

Dear Obsessed: Celebrity "obsessions" and fanaticism have been a normal part of adolescence since the advent of mass media. But the Internet has made celebs seem closer to us than ever. We not only can spend endless hours reading up on the details of their lives but also may even get a chance to interact with them on social media. This is even truer for Internet

celebrities, who inherently have close relationships to their fan bases. With this sort of access, it's easy to see how a young person could get carried away.

But there is so much good news in your letter. You have a thorough understanding of your issue. You realize it's impacting your life negatively. You want to change. And you're in therapy — which brings me to my ultimate point. Talk to your therapist about this. Knowing the full details of your life and background, he or she can help address the underlying problems that are driving your obsessive behavior. And I promise your therapist won't judge you.

Dear Annie: This is not a question, only a comment. I have read advice columns in the paper for 40 years. In that time, I have never seen advice given that is as appropriate and impressive as yours. It is without a doubt the best column in the paper. Thank you! — *Dale B.*

Dear Dale B.: Thank you for making my day. It's an honor to have this platform, and I'll keep doing my best not to disappoint. I hope to keep you as a reader for years to come.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll be making a pitch. Once someone has decided, it is useless to continue the explanation. If it's already sold, you don't need to sell it. And if it's already ruled out, there will be no way to sell it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Know and enforce your own rules about who gets close to you and how close they get. There may be no way to keep negative people out of your life, but you can certainly keep them out of your inner circle.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Confusion is often a matter of labeling. For instance, "my problem" and "your problem" is one that people often get wrong. So is "actionable" and "nonactionable." Call things what they are and life becomes easier on the mind.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Be wary of those who make more announcements than moves. Action often needs no announcement. What's happening is news. The rest is paid advertisement.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Once you join the group, it is likely that the group dynamics will influence you more than your own internal process. So, deciding whether or not to join will be the crucial juncture.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). This is probably a good time to avoid the temporary escape from other people's social media and the more lasting snarl of your own because, the thing is, you need to get so bored it forces you to deal with a problem head-on.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's not the right thing to do every day, but right now it will help you mightily to simply ignore the worrying facts, especially the inevitable ones. Live this day as though it were made just for you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). We like to think we're tracking with each other, but sometimes we assume to know a little more than we actually do. Don't let the gray area stay gray today. Spell it out. Make sure you're on the same page.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Is it better to learn from the mistakes of others, or from those of your own making? The first type of knowledge is more easily won and sooner forgotten. The second will be costly and permanent.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're tough, and you can extract the good out of criticism. The leader is harder on people with potential. The one who calls you out for mistakes is also privately noticing all the right things you're doing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The sad truth is people can be pretty shallow. As much as you could use some appreciation and acknowledgment, you'll mostly be judged on how you make others feel about themselves.

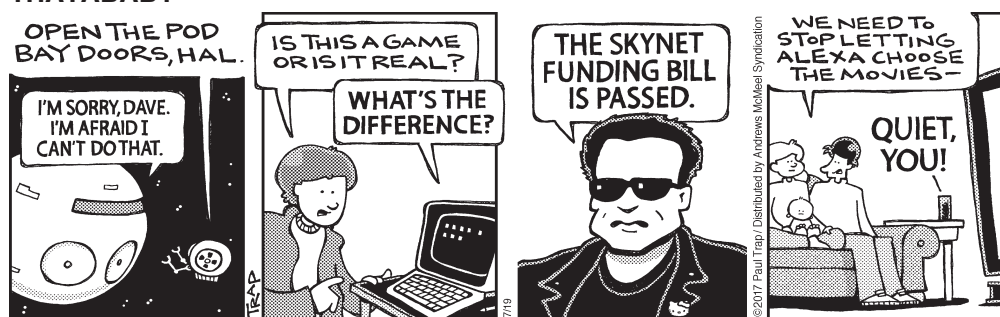
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Self-confidence leads to the win. Preparation leads to self-confidence. Plan ahead and practice the plan and you'll head in the direction of success.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (July 20). Believe in yourself. You are much deeper, wider and greater than you sometimes give yourself credit for. You already know the direction. When you push harder, you'll be amazed at what you can do. You'll lead a trend in September. November brings an investment opportunity. April brings travel and excitement. Capricorn and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 2, 22, 28 and 45.

FRANK AND ERNEST



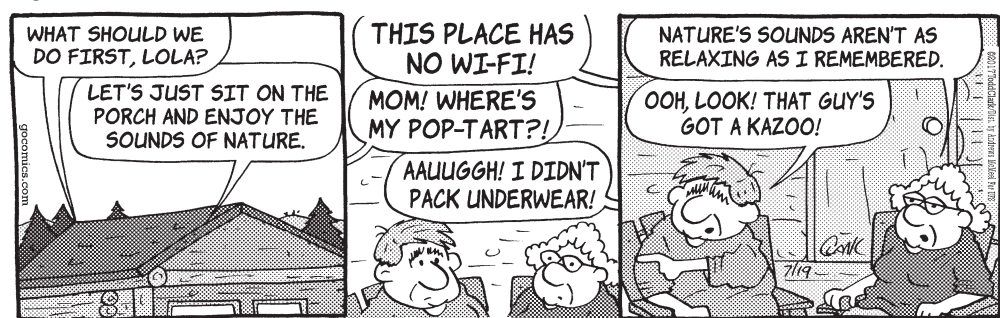
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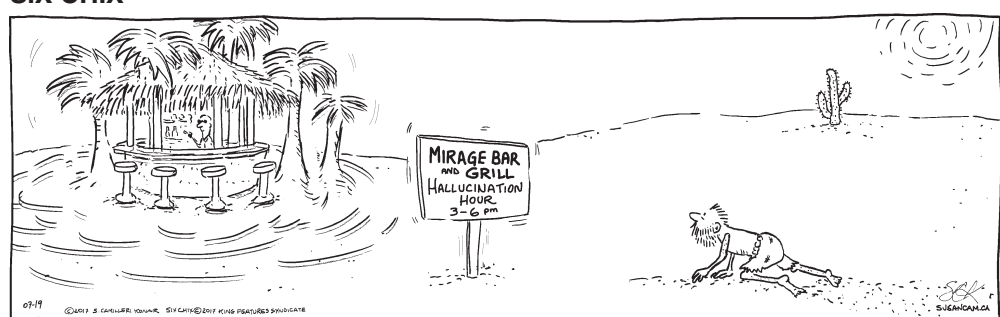
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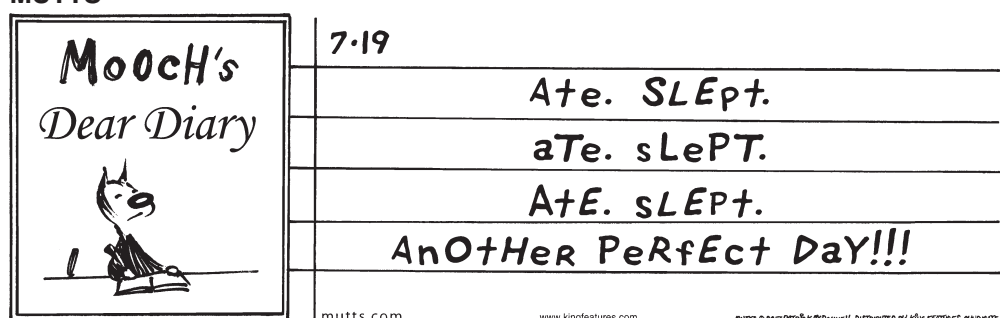
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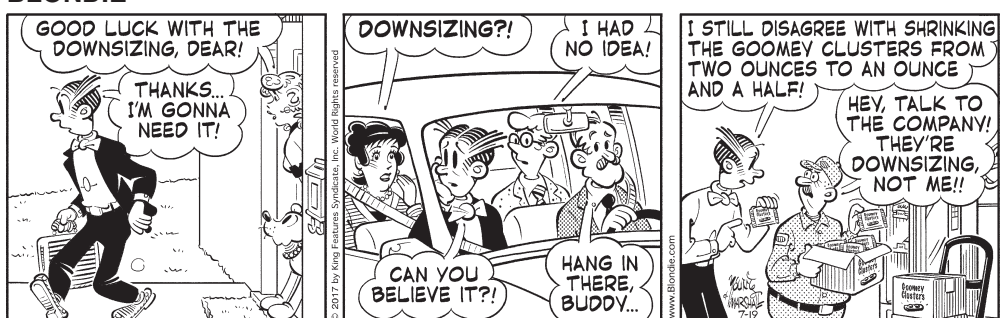
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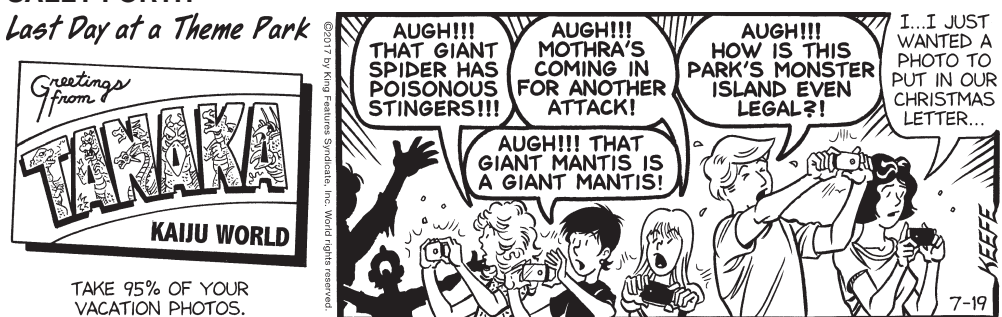
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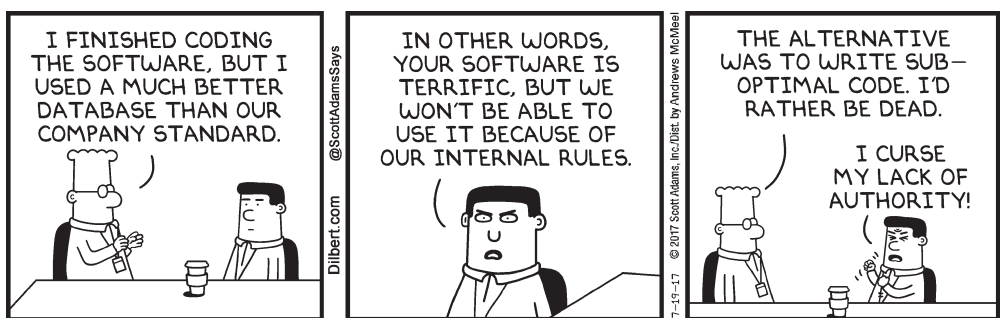
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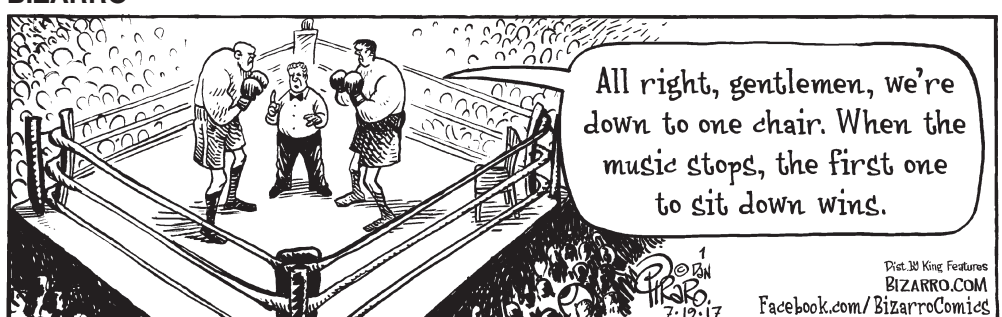
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