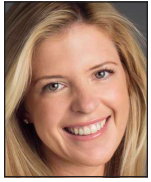


Friend can't stop talking

Dear Annie: I am sure that you have dealt with this in the past, but we have a friend in our circle who cannot stop talking. She is very smart and well-spoken, and she is extremely knowledgeable and has a lot of great things to share, but she never gives others a chance to talk about their thoughts or things going on in their lives. She talks over people, interrupts and monopolizes every conversation, both in person and on the telephone.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

We have talked to her many times, and some of our friends have chosen to not be a part of our activities because this gal just can't stop talking. We have even gotten to the point of sometimes being rude to get her attention. If we try to interject, she either speaks over us or gets upset because we have interrupted. When we do talk to her about this, she gets offended and refuses to participate in conversations, which seems passive-aggressive and makes us all uncomfortable. After she thinks about it and stops being

offended, it gets better for a short time — but then it starts up again. She also likes to pick one person and monopolize that person throughout a whole group gathering. When it happens with me, I feel as if I am being held captive, because I would like to visit with the others at the party.

She is a great friend, and we don't want to exclude her, but it has become so obnoxious and irritating that it may have to happen. We would like to keep this gal in our circle of friends, but it would be nice if she would finally figure it out and become a listener, as well as a talker. We have talked to her many times, so now we are all hoping that she sees this and takes note that it may be about her. — *Love You, But Just Stop Talking*

Dear LYBJST: Perhaps we should tap this woman's hot air as a renewable resource, because it doesn't seem to be dwindling. Even if she sees this letter, I'm doubtful it will have much of an impact. You've already tried talking to her about this issue

many times, and she's either ignored it or been indignant.

The only other thing I can think of is that she may not be well emotionally. So you might encourage her to seek counseling, where she could talk as much as she wants.

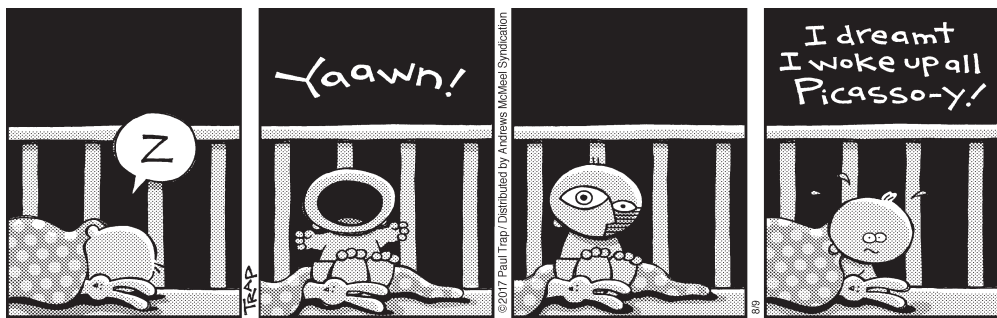
Dear Annie: I have just been confronted with a problem I've never seen mentioned in your column. On the street behind ours, a very pleasantly nice couple with two sweet little girls moved in. Our backyards meet. We became acquainted with them, and when I found out one of the girls had her third birthday coming up in a week, I purchased what I thought was a very nice gift, gave it to her mother in a brown paper bag and told her it was for "Libby's" birthday. She asked me whether there was something there for "Beth" (the other daughter, who's 4). My reply was, "I thought it was Libby's birthday." She informed me that Beth has feelings, too. I was shocked and at a loss for words. — *Confused Giver*

Dear Confused Giver: This mom is not only being rude to you but also hurting her daughters in the long run.

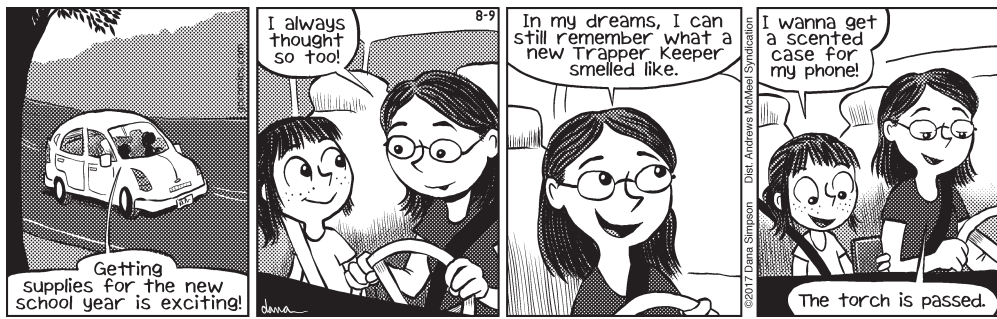
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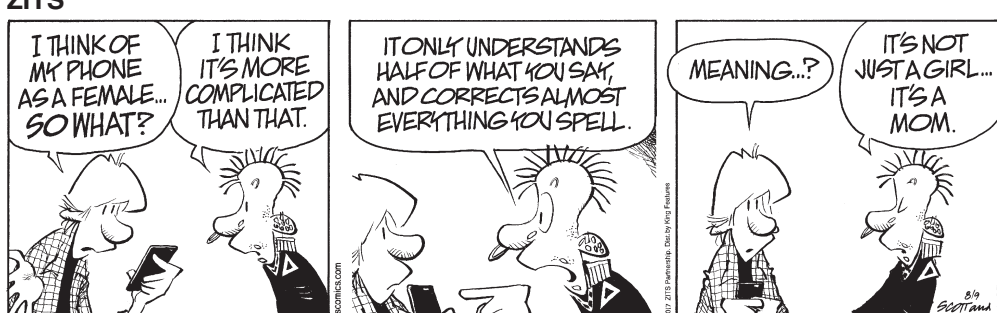
MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When you want a comparison, you tend to compare yourself with yourself, which is a much better habit than using anyone else as a benchmark. The trouble is, even for you, you're a hard act to follow.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're mentally versatile and will use your mind as you would any number of tools. Your mind can be a calculator, a map, a sleuth, a translator, a puzzle solver, a flashlight — and a sleeping pill if need be.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Here's an idea that might seem radical: What if your actions best represented your own needs, feelings and values instead of those of your loved one? Bring your attention back to yourself and an internal locus of control.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Good fortune starts with how you treat people, which, it turns out, is also the beginning and end result. How you treat people is the whole story! For you it's not always about serving and pleasing, but it is always about respecting.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The impulse to do something sneaky is not just about the thrill of your quickening pulse or the adrenaline rush that comes with the risk of being caught. The impulse is also a sign of needs unmet in the current situation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). People say that it's not about the cards you're dealt — that it's how you play them that matters. Of course that's silly. Good cards win, and playing bad ones requires bluffing. Today's game will be tricky. You'll prevail.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Life can be strange and complicated, especially when love's involved. The romantic shades of love bring out the most extreme examples of this, which may cause you to wonder whether that kind of love is

worth the trouble.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll be zipping along today, moving in spite of your restraints or maybe even because of them. The limits do have a way of focusing your power in one direction.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). In the past you felt it best to concede your power to another. It made the situation easier, and at that moment it seemed like the right thing to do. That moment is passed. It is now time to take your power back.

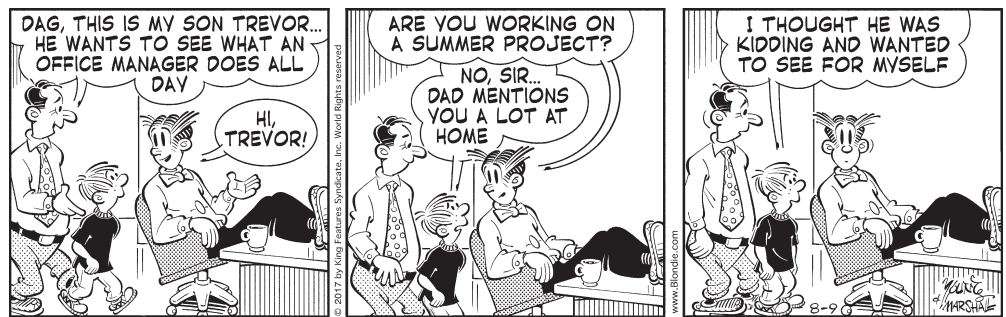
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Much activity will center on possessions. You'll treat possessions as living things, with respect for their purpose, attention to their maintenance and storage that honors their aesthetic value.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Before you leave the house, get centered on what you want. This will prevent you from needless wandering. See, you'll be lucky today. Hearts and doors will open to you. With so few borders, the limits must come from within.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). This will be a sociable day in which your relationships run harmoniously. If there's the least bit of tension it will serve as a spicy touch for the ultimate enhancement of the tie.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 10). Relationships smooth out. In the months to come you'll educate yourself and get a handle on changing what bothers you. In 2018 it's about building something new in its place. A mentor will help you make a plan and execute it. A dream will spring to life in March. Romantic getaways happen in May. New family comes in June. Gemini and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 17, 8, 33 and 41.

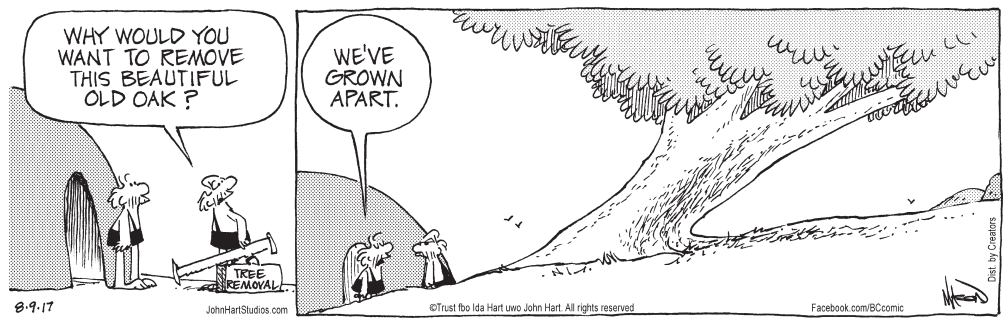
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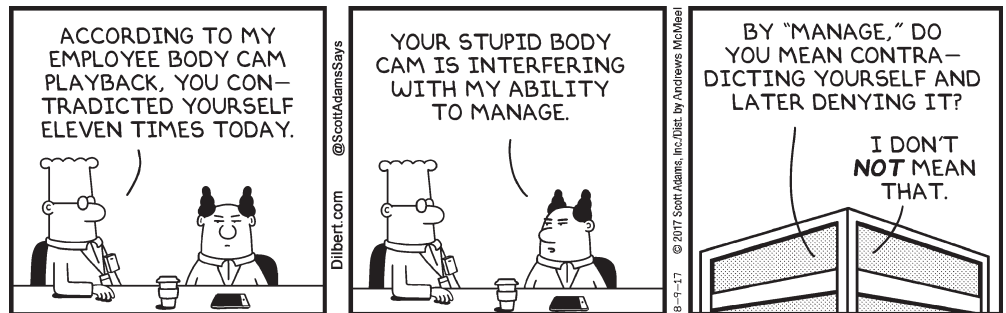
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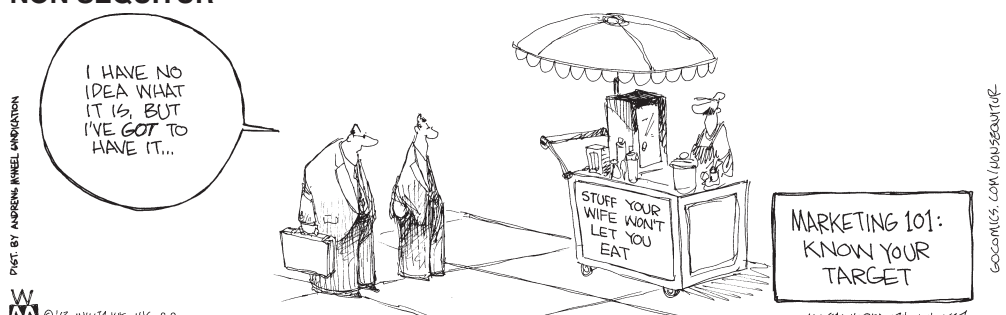
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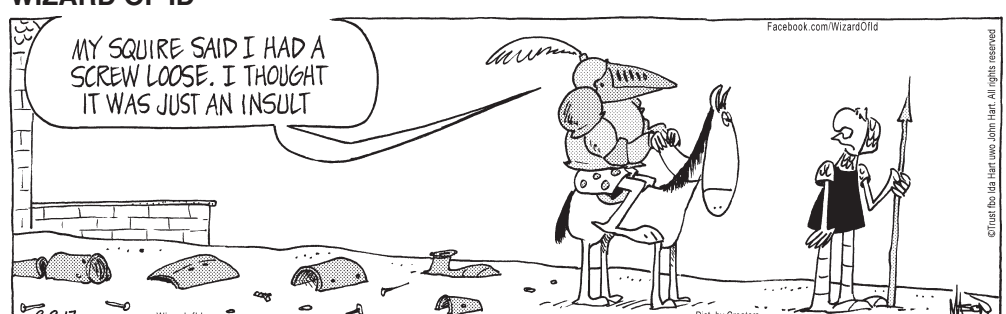
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