

Recognizing cognitive decline

Dear Annie: How do you determine whether an associate is experiencing some memory loss, dementia or cognitive decline? With a close longtime friend, you can usually note a change from the person's normal functioning. But if you became friends with someone during the retirement years, you often don't know what someone's level of functioning or personality was like in earlier years. In an organization, church or club, an older adult may have committed to doing a job, become unable to do what's required yet want to keep his or her hat in the ring and save face. We wonder how to approach this with kindness and practicality.

It is a wonderful idea to focus on issues facing older adults. There are so many of them, and the numbers are growing rapidly. Thank you for your interest. — *Jane M.*

Dear Jane: Judging by your letter, you're naturally thoughtful. Let that innate sense of empathy steer you and you

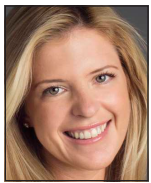
won't go far astray. If a friend of yours shows signs of memory loss, talk to the friend one-on-one, and use gentle, non-accusatory language. Stick to phrases such as "I noticed you seem to be having difficulty with scheduling lately" rather than "You keep forgetting our plans." Similarly, if someone in a club to which you belong repeatedly fails to fulfill duties he or she signed up for, talk to that person privately and offer to help out. The more gingerly you handle the subject the less likely the person is to become defensive — but there's still no guarantee on that. Call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 800-272-3900 for more information on navigating this difficult issue.

Dear Annie: I just read a column in which you advised a woman, "Tortured in New York," that she had a right to request a female nurse because of trauma in her past. Would you say, then, that a white person who distrusts black people

has a right to request a white nurse? Would you similarly say that someone prejudiced against gays could ask for a straight nurse? Nurses are professionals with extensive education and training. Their genetics (race, gender, sexual preference) should not be a barrier to doing their job. After all, if everyone asked for a female nurse, then men would be barred from the profession as women de facto were barred from being doctors, college professors and business executives only a short time ago. Pretty slippery slope you are on. — *Think Twice*

Dear Think Twice: Of course I do not condone discrimination based on race, sexual orientation or gender. I have the utmost respect for male nurses, and I wholeheartedly agree that they deserve equal opportunities in the workplace. "Tortured in New York" was a survivor of sexual assault and had unique needs as a patient. As many health care professionals who have written to me in recent days affirmed, hospitals will do their best to accommodate such needs.

DEAR ANNIE

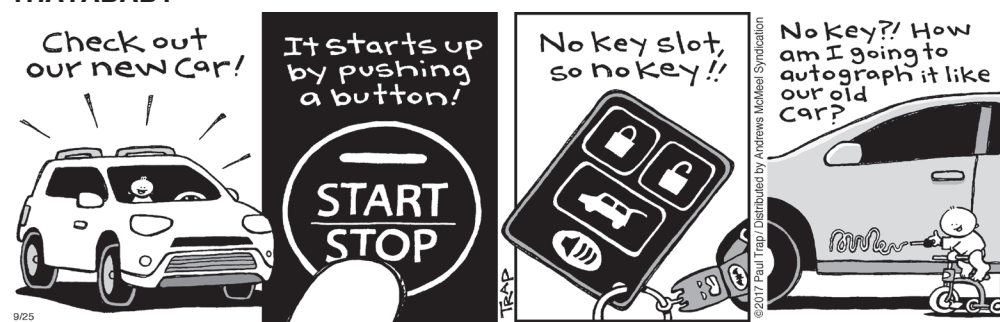


Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

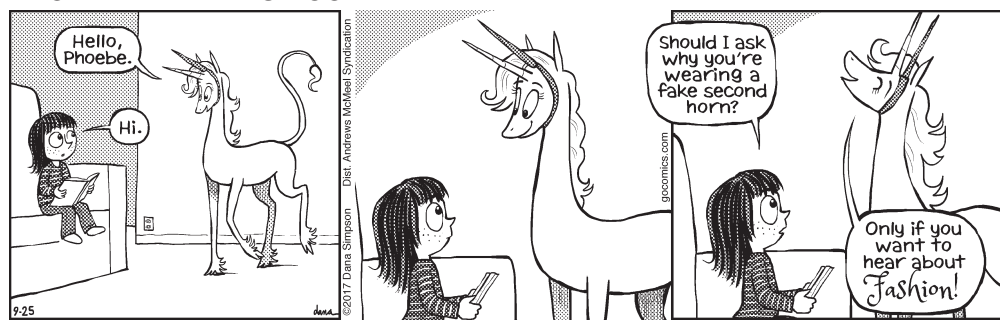
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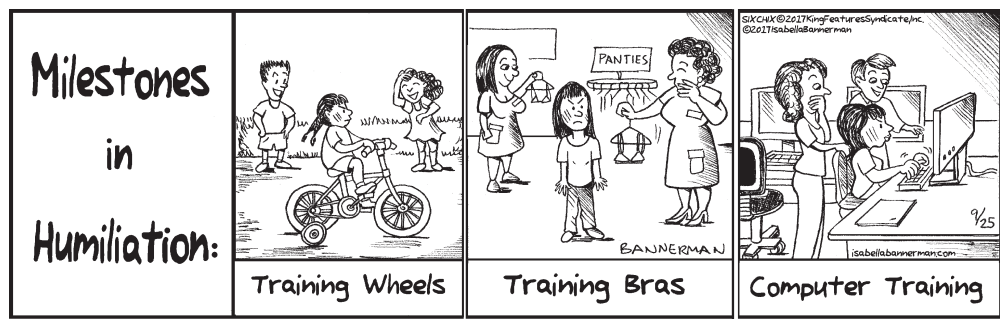
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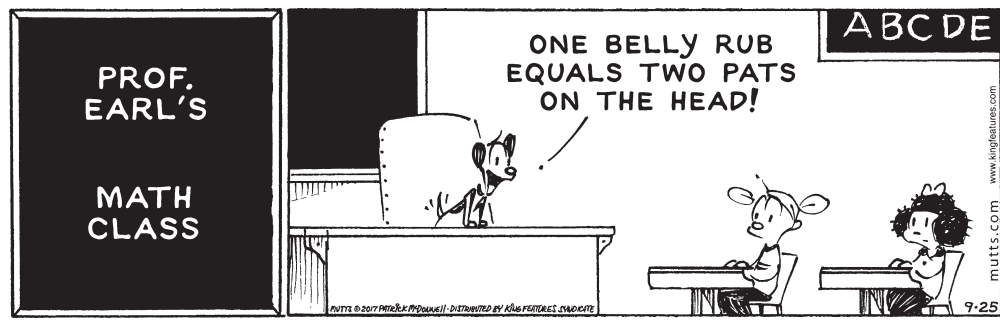
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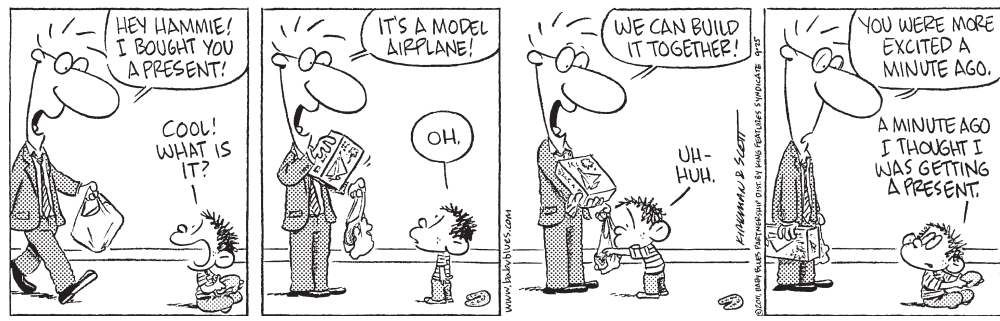
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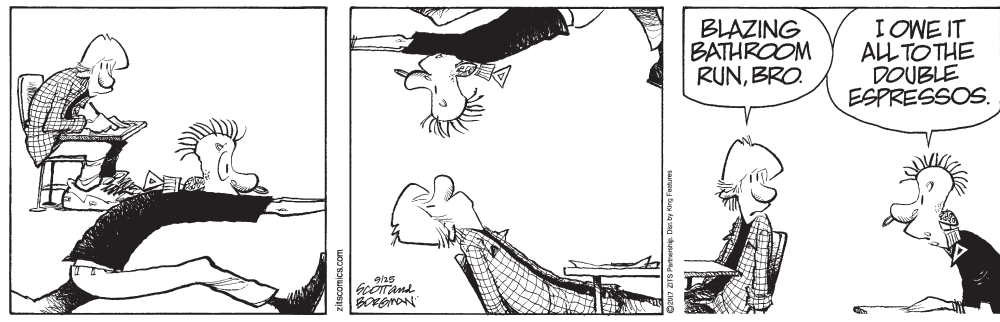
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BABY BLUES



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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). In some ways you feel like you're finally getting the respect you deserve, and in other ways it feels like too little too late. Why isn't this enough? That's a valid question. Perhaps the attention is coming from the wrong person.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Pushing won't make things happen any faster. Back off instead: That might work. Certainly people will want to rush to you when you give them a compelling enough reason and then leave the right amount of space between you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You can't help but be curious, and your compassion makes it difficult for you to shut a door once it's ajar, therefore people will open up to you whether you want them to or not.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The fact-finding part of your mission could go on longer, but the law of diminishing returns would apply. You have all of the information you need to make your decision.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Whatever game you choose to play, you'll be good for the game. Your high level of sportsmanship will bring out the best in your opponents. You're especially well-matched with Sagittarius and Aries.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your point of view isn't wrong, though it may seem a little stale today. You've seen things from this angle for too long. Spin the globe. When it comes to worldviews, all reference points are relative.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Because you put care into the little things, people will trust you with the big things. From dressing yourself to presenting big projects, attention to detail is

what will make the difference.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Wrap up those loose ends, because a new chapter is opening up for you very soon. You're about to meet someone who will help you do the very thing you've wanted to for so long but never had the opportunity to.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Smiles improve moods. Even fake ones. So does sunshine. So do hugs. The things that make you feel happier may seem corny to you, but don't let that stop you from trying them.

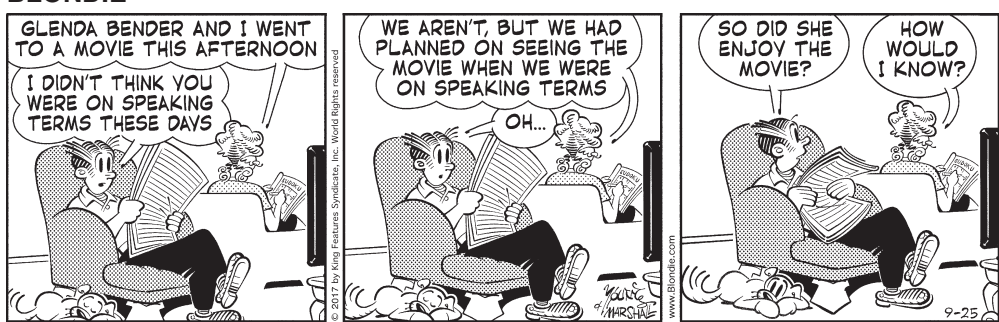
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You appreciate agreeable people, but you're more likely to trust those who disagree with you, since it takes nerve to disagree with someone as strong as you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Choose your words carefully. Semantics matter. That's why car dealers advertise "pre-owned vehicles" instead of "used cars." Consider which words might give you an emotional advantage.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You don't have to work in so-called "artistic" media for what you're doing to be considered an art. Love is an art. Walking is an art. Artistic impulses will be validated by like minds who see the deeper levels.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 26). There are people whose lives get better because of what you contribute this year, and that is among the most satisfying of feelings. The last part of 2017 focuses on honing your talents and economizing your life. There's a burst of happy love at the beginning of 2018. Exciting, glamorous events punctuate your calendar. Libra and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 7, 20, 19 and 42.

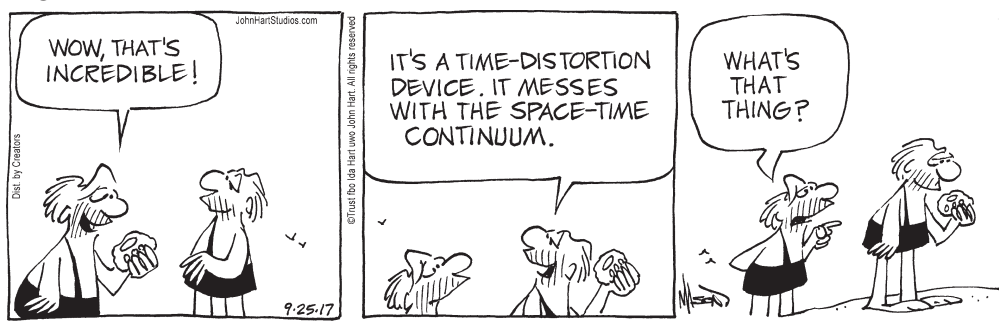
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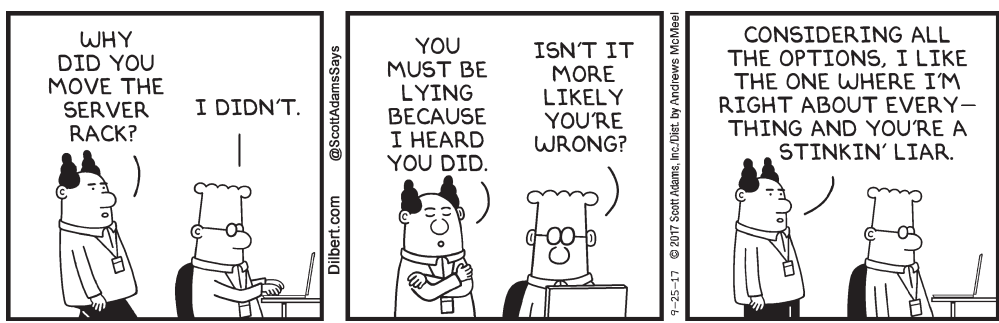
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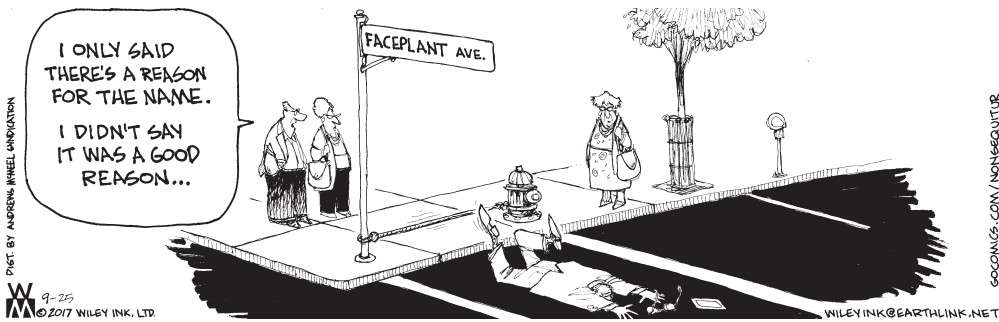
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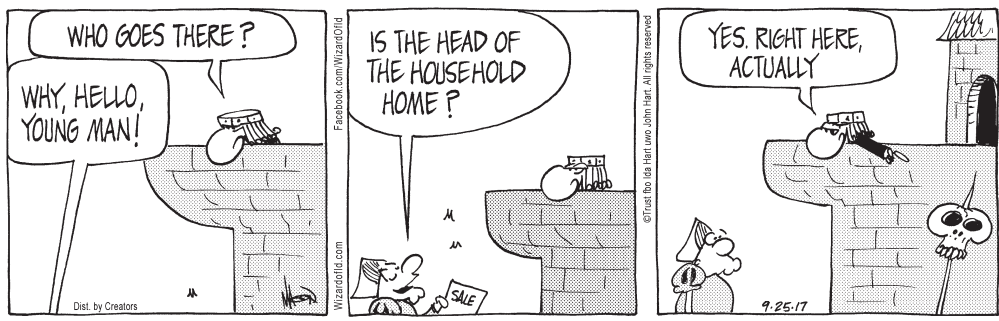
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