DEAR

ANNIE

Annie Lane

FEATURES

Sons's opinion upsets mom

Dear Annie: Just the other day, my son, "Ben," was talking to his stepdad, and he said some hurtful things about me — that I'm all about me, that it's always my way or the highway. I took that very personally. It made me

cry. I never expected my eldest son to say something or feel that way about me. I took it as him trying to hurt my feelings. He needs to understand that with the kids all out of the house now, I do often feel that it is all about me. The house is empty; my two elder kids don't even call me to see whether I'm OK or sick,

and I think that if I ever become sick, I will keep it to myself and not inform them. Am I wrong for that?

Now I don't feel comfortable even asking to see my grandchildren, because I fear it's been embedded in their minds that Grandma is all about her and no one else.

I posted about this situation on Facebook to see how everyone would respond and what advice people might offer. A co-worker came to me and comforted me about the situation. All I could do was cry. I never knew my kids felt that way about their mom. Please give me some advice. — Devastated Mom

Dear Devastated Mom: Slow down and take a deep

breath. This is a whirlwind, but it seems that at the center of it all is your feeling of abandonment. I reckon that's caused you to lash out in ways you might not recognize as lashing out — with guilt trips, for instance. If you've been trying to get your kids to pay attention to you by making them feel bad, that

has backfired. It's time to stop catastrophizing and start communicating. Talk to your children. Tell them you didn't realize how negatively they felt about your behavior. Ask what vou could do to be a bigger part of their lives. And for everyone's sake, please stop posting about it on Facebook.

Dear Annie: I know that some people complain about "older" trick-or-treaters in their neighborhoods and that some people even refuse to hand out candy to kids who look older than 13.

In my view, it's a fine line between child and teen, and it's a difficult adjustment for most. Teens still love some kids activities, yet they want to appear grown-up. When we get older kids ringing our doorbell on Halloween, we always give them double the candy and tell them so. We also tell them that we're proud of them for choosing to have fun. They are delighted with our response, and you can see the appreciation in their eyes.

Lighten up, people! They have the rest of their lives to be adults. Let them hang on to some parts of their childhood a bit longer. And let the parents do the parenting; it's not our business. Our grown children let their own children know when it was time to quit trick-or-treating.

It also doesn't matter how much, if any, care was put into a costume. It's rare when they're not in costume, though. Teens are quite creative and enjoy our noticing a costume. We love the night. It's fun! — Marie

Dear Marie: I'm printing this just in time for Halloween. May we all embrace such a fun-loving

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Notice who takes your feelings into consideration. Notice who has your back. Notice who shows up. who offers first, who laughs at your jokes. You deserve a supportive team.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The fever of a retail crush, flirtation, love affair or seductive business deal is not a good state of mind for decision-making. The wanting makes you think irrationally. Cool down first. Come back to it tomorrow.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If you're hesitant about sharing things about yourself because you think it might be too boring or you might be opening yourself to judgment, it's a sign that you could use some more relatable friends in your life.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Family will require more tending than usual. It's a good thing, because they need you and you need to give, so all will feel better for it. Warmth is your specialty.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Of course, memory never tells the whole story. When looking back, people get fuzzy on the details of interacting with one another. What they tend to remember is how you made them feel.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). It's impossible to be permanently excited. Excitement is the top of an arc of energy. Without the low of boredom or normalcy, there would be no high of excitement. You'll ride out an uneventful period. A higher energetic state is coming.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's a day of many tones and feelings. You'll pass through numerous states of mind — twice as many as you usually would in the course of a day. It's a kind of workout for your feelings. You'll

gain strength and balance.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A good story is a family heirloom. A good storyteller is the custodian of that treasure. Your heart and mind are open. You'll understand where the story is in the seemingly everyday events of you and yours.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There's too much at stake to leave an interaction to chance. Decide before going in what impression and message you want to relay. Get clear about what's in it for you and what you're willing to give in return.

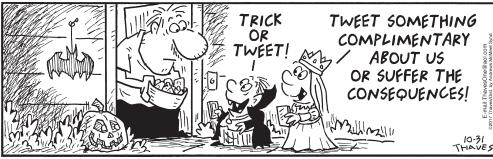
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). As for those who monopolize the conversation, steamroll you when you're trying to express yourself and don't ask for your thoughts and ideas on the matter — well, it's more than selfishness. It's a warning sign.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're not in the most sensible mood, but there are some things that are better accomplished from an irrational state. If you're applying yourself to the right endeavor, it will all work out perfectly.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Don't get too disillusioned. When the beautiful picture starts to crack as falsities are revealed, think of it as another phase. Keep looking. Get in closer until it's lovely again.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 1). Your birthday will turn on a light in a far-reaching corner of your mind. If you've been fulfilling someone else's dreams instead of your own, that stops this year. In January, keep studying or trying until you get your breakthrough. Leo and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 17, 4, 21, 19 and 42.

FRANK AND ERNEST



BLONDIE



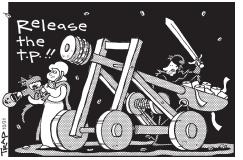




THATABABY



NO CANDY HERE, SO HOW BOUT A BOX HEALTH



SALLY FORTH



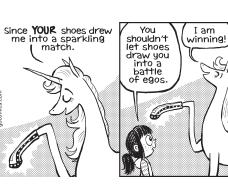
BUT WHEN I WAS A KID WE DID **SO MUCH** TOGETHER. WE WATCHED **EVERY** SATURDAY MORNING CARTOON TOGETHER. EVEN THAT STUPID ONE WITH THE PIGEON CHASING. THEN YOU WOULD SHOW ME WHAT WAS RIGHT AND WRONG IN THE ANIMATION DESIGN. THAT'S HOW I LEARNED AQUAMAN WAS OFF MODEL ALMOST EVERY

AND YOU COACHED EVERY ONE OF MY LITTLE LEAGUE TEAMS, EVEN AS I SOMEHOW GOT PROGRESSIVELY WITH EACH YEAR. I COACHED, TOO. HILARY'S TEAM. I'D LIKE TO THINK I MADE IT AS MUCH FUN AS OU DID, BUT THEN I WOULD GIVE A SPEECH

PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN







B.C.





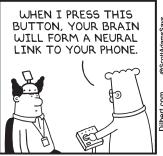




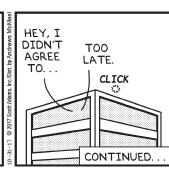








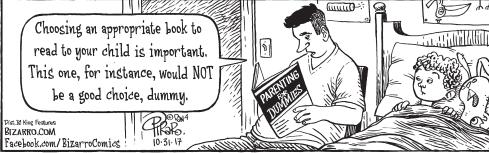




SIX CHIX



BIZARRO



MUTTS



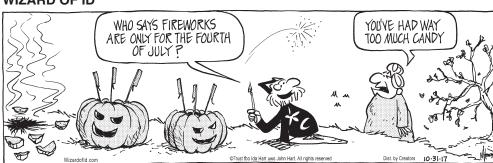








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ROSE IS ROSE



THEFTS OF PEANUT CHEWS ARE EXPECTED TO RISE THIS HALLOWEEN DUE TO DISTRACTED TRICK-OR-TREATERG.