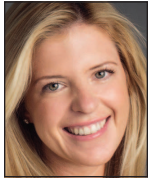


Friend won't help himself

Dear Annie: I'm at my wits' end dealing with my friend's glum, woe-is-me attitude. I've known "Max" since we worked together at a restaurant when I was in college. He was in his early 20s and had grown up in the town. He said he regretted not getting a bachelor's degree. As we became better friends and he saw the projects I was doing for my classes (I was an art major), he became inspired and started making plans to go to community college and then transfer. A year passed; then two. That never happened. (Not a big deal in itself, but I mention it as part of a pattern.)

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Six years ago, I graduated and got a job in New York. Max and I have stayed in touch, and he visits about once a year. He's still in the same town, working at a different restaurant. I don't say that judgmentally. I don't think there's anything wrong with it. The problem is that Max does. He's been talking about wanting to change his life for years now, but he takes no steps to do so. I've tried every approach I can think of. I did the

supportive thing at first — building up his self-esteem, encouraging him to try therapy, helping him research schools, offering to help get him a restaurant job in New York, etc. After a couple of years, I realized he wouldn't act on any of this, so I stopped offering solutions and have just shown tough love. For example, when he complains about how none of his friends calls to hang out, I tell him that he can't expect people to always be thinking of him. But nothing seems to get through to him.

Max never asks about what's up in my life, and when I try to tell him, somehow he finds a way of bringing the conversation back to him. I'm starting to feel used and a little resentful, if you couldn't tell. I care about Max and think he's a good guy. But how can you help someone who doesn't really want to help himself? — *Eeyore's Friend*

Dear Eeyore's Friend: You can't. At this point, the kindest thing you can do for Max is to refuse to be his dumping ground

any longer. Only after he's got nowhere to unload will he be forced to confront the weight of his problem. A therapist could most likely help him a great deal, and you can encourage him to seek counseling one more time — but disengage and take space after that. Your friendship with Max can only be healthy after he's purged that toxic mindset.

Dear Annie: I enjoy your column, and you have great advice. In the case of the "bad" milk, though, not so much. Spoiled milk tastes bad but doesn't make you sick. Sour cream, yogurt, cheese and other dairy products are made from spoiled milk.

I have never thrown away milk. "Bad" milk makes the best pancakes, biscuits, banana bread, coffee cake, muffins and more. If I'm not able to use the spoiled milk right away, I freeze it in small containers for later use. I use it whenever a baking recipe calls for buttermilk. I couldn't bake without it! — *Never Wasteful*

Dear Never Wasteful: You make a great point that I failed to bring up. Milk can be used in baked goods after it's no longer good to drink. Waste not, want not.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Q: Who tries things a thousand unsuccessful ways before getting one winner? A: Winners. You're attempting something that's not guaranteed, and easy results are not a part of this endeavor, but keep going anyway.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The aim is to make decisions based on your vision for your life, not the moment-to-moment minutiae of moods. This is made much easier when it's a strong, juicy vision. You'll work on that today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Some will be very aware of rank and order and who's coming in first place and last place, etc., but you can be assured that your gut feeling on the matter is 100 percent correct: It's not about all that. It's about the work.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Though you'll be tempted to take on a task that is as challenging as it is ridiculous, consider this wise saying first: Don't teach a pig to sing; it frustrates you and annoys the pig.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Even though you're the cat of the zodiac — i.e., the top predator and, it follows, king of the jungle — you have a merciful side. That's what will come into play today as you walk out of your house more the shepherd than the lion.

VRIGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Everyone has a secret — something to remember when you're bored with social interactions. Persist. Guaranteed, there is something interesting to know here if you hang in and pay attention.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Though it's not wise to measure your progress by someone else's standards, it's also the way the world works, more or less, in the practical order of things. Think about what they'll be judging, and gear

up for it.
SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Are you getting the feeling that the perfectly right moment you're waiting for is never going to happen? Well, you're right about that. It's information that could also be your golden ticket to move forward regardless.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Since you have baggage around being socially accepted today, you can act out (without trying, because it's just who you are), and you can enjoy the way it pushes everyone's boundaries, including your own.

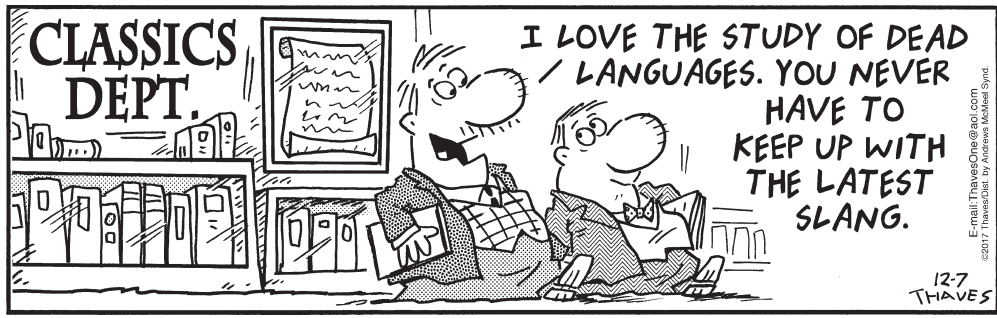
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). To notice then react — this is how an awake world operates. To notice and not react — well, that's the usual. You're different. Prove it today. There's a lot at stake, actually.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're not so worried about becoming something these days. It's more about un-becoming those things that were imposed on you. Things that served other people's interests, not yours.

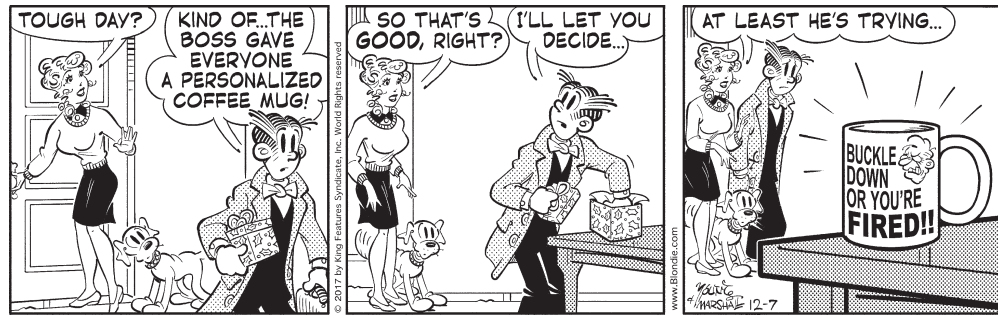
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You've mined the gold in your mistakes before, but this vein is deeper than you imagined. It's a good time to look back and consider how you might have done it differently, and how you'll do it next time.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 8). You don't shy away from goals just because they push you into uncomfortable territory. You know what's worth doing, and that will be the guiding principle of this solar return. There's a favorable change in February bonding you with another. You'll continue along a path of beautiful vistas and beatific scenery. Cancer and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 3, 8, 38 and 4.

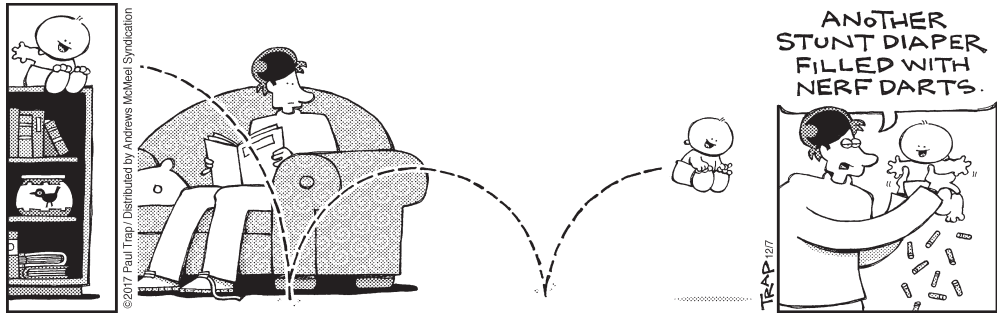
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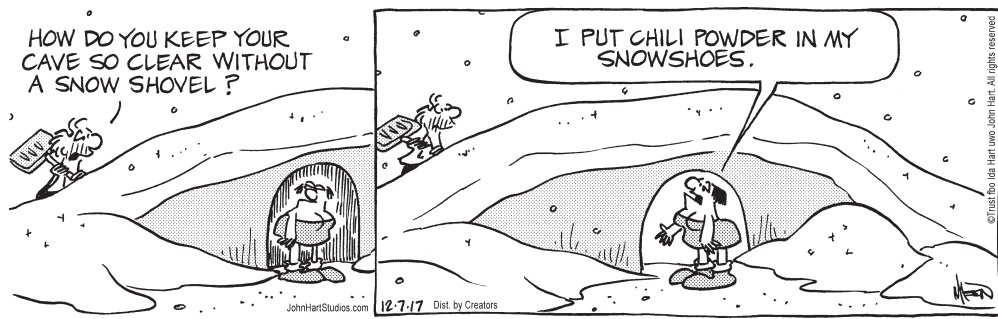
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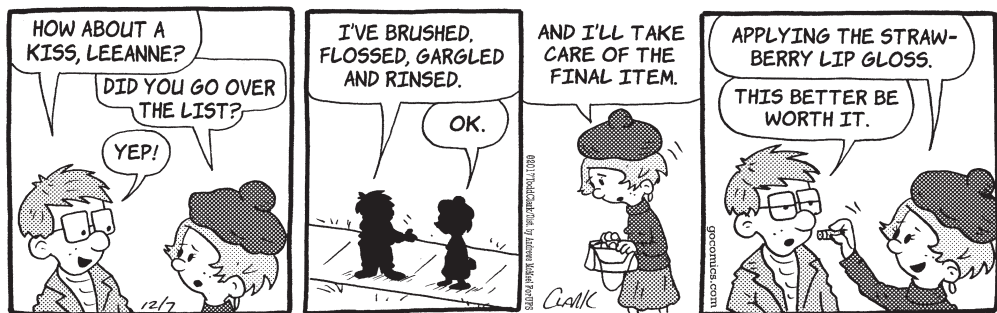
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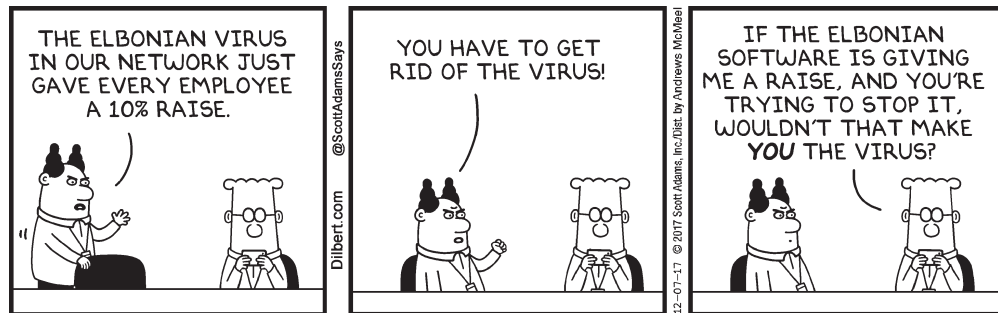
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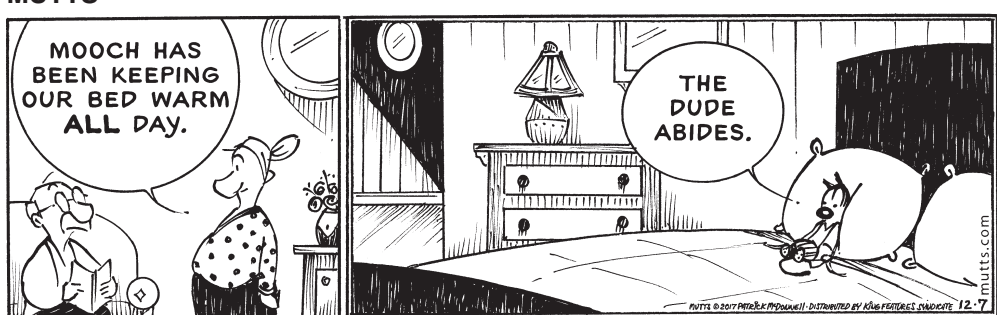
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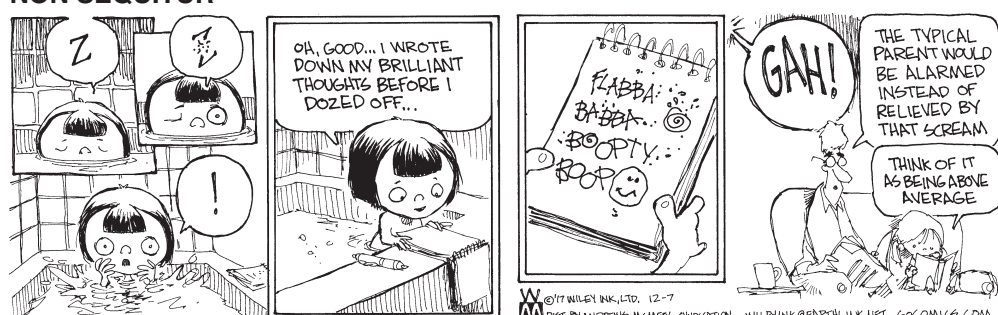
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