

Should I rebuild this friendship?

Dear Annie: My father was diagnosed with cancer a year ago. I told a close childhood friend. She responded, "I don't know if I can deal with that." Then she didn't speak to me for six months. This was hurtful — as I had recently spent many weekends traveling (I live out of town) and hundreds of dollars as her maid of honor, supported her emotionally through the stress of wedding prep, and helped her move — but I didn't have the emotional capacity at the time to try to rebuild the friendship.



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Now that a year has passed, we have been occasionally spending time together again, though we avoid serious conversation. She introduces me as her "best friend." Recently, I accidentally referred to someone else as my best friend, and she took offense. I don't want to lose an old friendship, but I can't imagine being more than casual friends. How can I tactfully tell her that she is far from my best friend and that I'm uncomfortable with her possessiveness?

Or is it kinder to leave her to her own perception of our relationship? — *Less Invested*

Dear Less Invested: Don't put any stock in this woman. You told her your father had cancer, and her response was, "I don't know if I can deal with that." That is not a best friend; that is not even a mediocre friend. I applaud your desire to be upfront; however, in this case, such a conversation would only give her a chance to offer excuses. Her behavior last year told you all you need to know. Keep your distance, and spend your time with people who truly value it.

Dear Annie: One of my biggest pet peeves is when you are in a parking lot and you kindly stop and let people go in front of you and they don't think to thank you by waving. Most people seem to just expect it! I always thank with a wave and feel others should, too. What say you? — *Jan*

Dear Jan: I think they should wave. But if they don't, just pretend they did — give yourself a

little wave of acknowledgment, if that helps — and then move on with your day.

Dear Annie: This is in response to the letter from "News Junkie," who found himself constantly watching or reading the news and was feeling exhausted. As a therapist, I wonder what's driving this person to constantly know what's happening on the political scene. One reason that people go overboard on the news is that they're unconsciously hoping to decrease their anxiety by knowing more. However, paradoxically, this behavior usually backfires and increases anxiety. Another reason is that they feel pressure to be up-to-date when there are discussions of politics, which happens more often than it used to. This group of people may be afraid of not appearing politically savvy or fear being left out of conversations. — *LCSW*

Dear LCSW: I'm always grateful for a clinician's take on a letter. You raise some great additional considerations. Perhaps "News Junkie" and others binging on news would benefit from looking inward to consider what's driving their overconsumption.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Part of the reason for your tough time back there was that your gifts were not fully appreciated in the arena in which you were trying to apply them. You will focus your natural abilities differently and net much bigger rewards.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Today it will be futile to try to move things along at a different pace than is currently happening, and no one cool is doing that anyway. So just relax and let things meander as they will. You may even like where they wind up.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Much will depend on the question you ask. The right question will be like a magic button that opens up the elevator doors and allows you to step inside and go as high or as deep as you like.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). As much as you might like to be fooled by that charismatic pitch person (especially if said pitch has to do with being utterly in love with you), you wisely recognize the large element of drama here for what it is.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If you can finish it in 10 minutes, don't take 20. It will never be perfect, but it was probably good enough about five paces back. As they say in business, "Ship it."

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). If you don't draw a line between what you're willing to do and what you're not, that line will emerge as if from great unseen forces — like hot lava drawn up from the core of the earth, thick and red.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You've made compromises, some of them tremendous. It wasn't such a big deal to you because you sensed that what you were getting out of the deal would develop you in untold ways. Now here

you are, about to push "repeat" on that.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll fix dysfunction and address what's not quite right. How? First of all, no one will even see it as "dysfunctional" until you point it out. Of course, you would never point out such a thing without a solution to offer.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you say only what you mean, some won't hear you, some won't understand you, some will take offense. But the ones who hear, understand and accept the message will give you total trust.

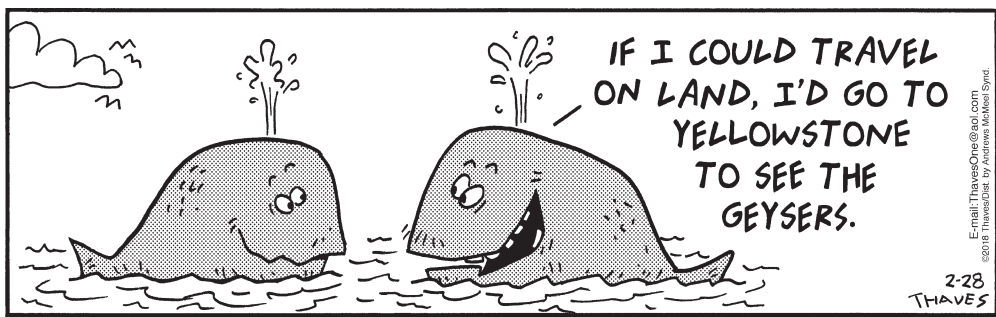
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It seems that the stability model doesn't offer all that much stability after all. It's time to spend more time with the visionaries — the creative people who are more excited by what could be than by what has been.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). In poems and in parties, a great entry point is when things have already happened. Actually, this is true of relationships as well. You'll get the sense that you're hopping onto a moving train.

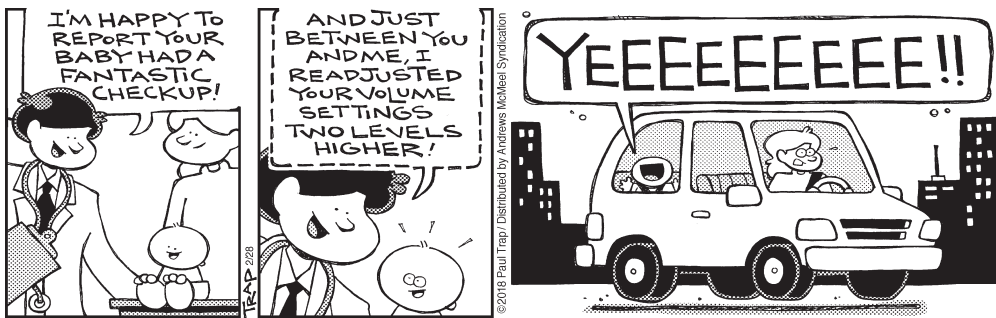
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll present yourself through a variety of formats. Whether it's a meeting, an online forum, a telephone conversation or another medium, it's the listening you do that will make the best impression.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 1). You know more than you let on. The silent power in that will be a key to your breakthrough this month. A lucky paycheck is involved, too. Family ties bring about strange and story-worthy events. There's a contest of sorts this summer and entering will make you a winner in more ways than one. Sagittarius and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 3, 33, 38 and 14.

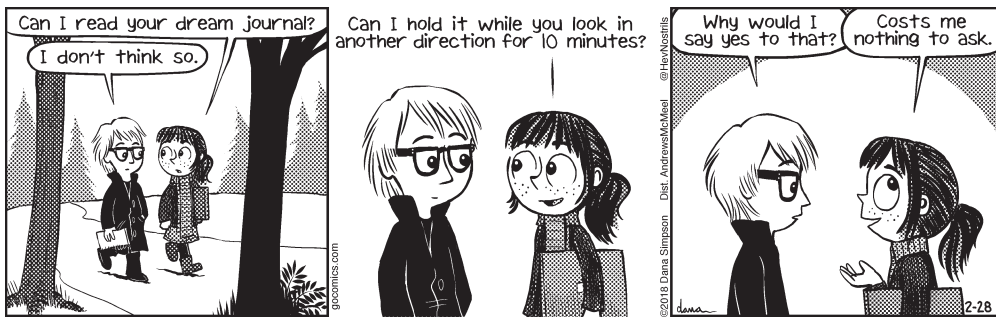
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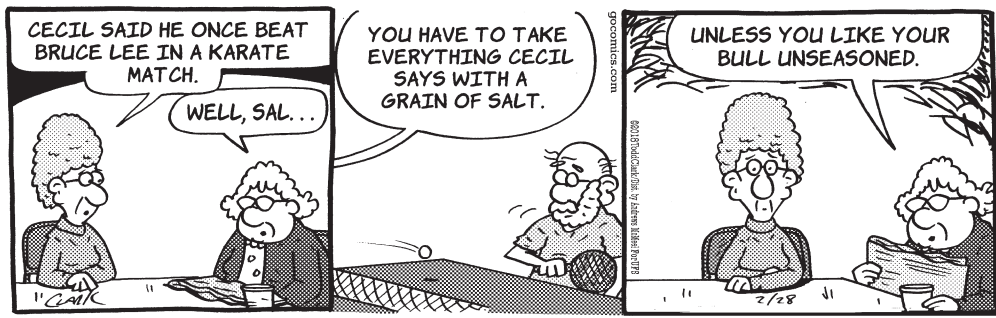
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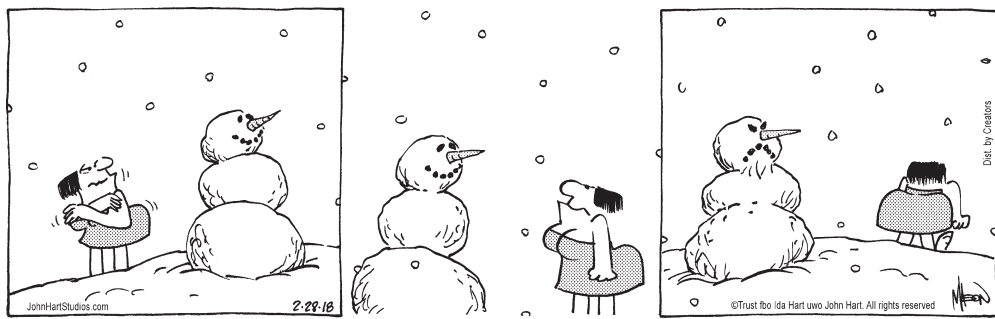
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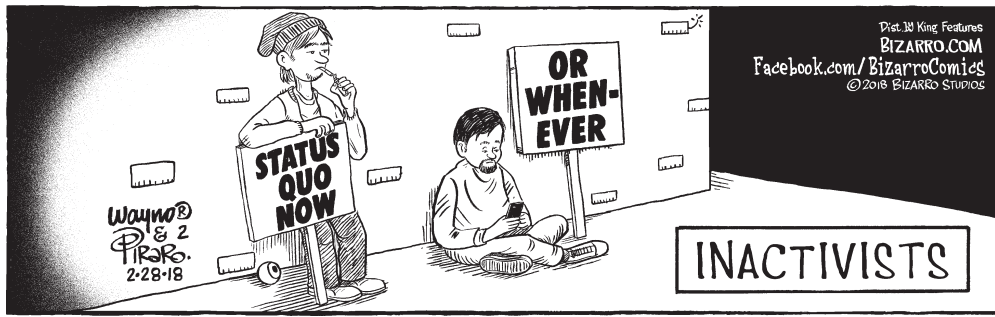
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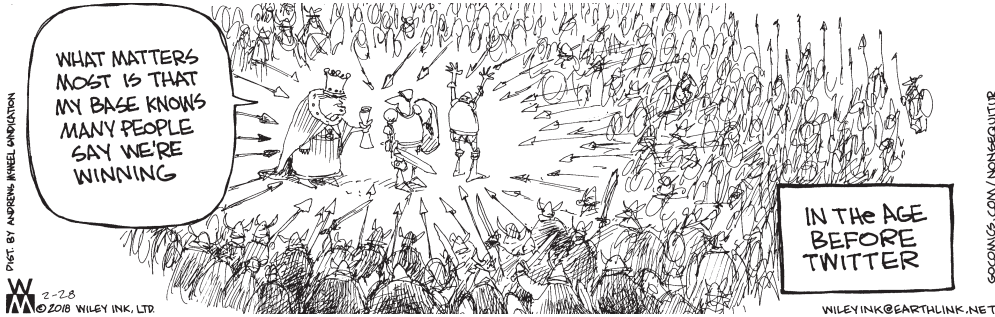
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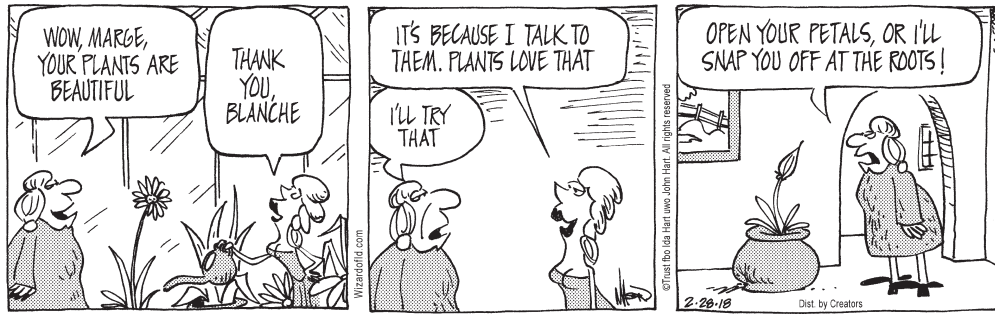
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