

Bad attitude on gratitude

Dear Annie: I'm in my late 30s. I've read the many letters you've printed about how thank-you notes have gone the way of the dodo. I have a different angle on this complaint.

Let me preface this by saying that I am not perfect in this realm. It took my wife and me forever to get around to sending thank-you notes after our wedding, and I think that most of the readers who have weighed in are expecting too much.

That said, I am noticing a trend of giving no thanks at all. When I get a gift or someone does a favor for me, I send thanks via email or text (though I realize that a handwritten note or a phone call would be better). That's all I expect myself, but some of my peers don't even text a thank-you when I give them something. I find that very annoying.

I used to chalk up this thank-you note issue to laziness, but I'm beginning to agree with your readers who say that gratitude is trending down. It's disturbing. It takes next to no time

to shoot off a quick "Thanks for that!" on your smartphone. — *You're Welcome*

Dear You're Welcome: Laziness is the enemy of gratitude, and reading your letter I have to agree that it seems to have the upper hand in a big way. Thanks to technology, it's easier than ever to be self-absorbed and unappreciative of others; to do whatever's convenient.

But the good news is that gratitude is also the enemy of laziness. Fight the good fight by looking for ways to be more thankful in your own life every day. Perhaps you will be a positive influence on your friends. In the meantime, I'd stop sending them presents. Redirect your generous energy toward charitable causes or loved ones who will really appreciate it.

Dear Annie: Your advice to Granddad's Girl about speaking to him about his driving abilities fell far short. This man very likely has early dementia. His continued driving is a huge risk to himself and others. His fam-

ily needs to insist he see his doctor, accompanied by a family member, to discuss this. I am a retired internist, and I often had to deal with this difficult problem. This was often scheduled as a "check up" to avoid alarming the elderly patient.

Discussion of driving abilities and tests of memory, spatial orientation, reflexes and executive functioning can be done in the office. Almost all states have laws requiring or allowing physicians to report impaired or potentially impaired drivers.

Going beyond having the DMV test his driving abilities, which might lead to his license being revoked, I would encourage the family to disable or remove his car. Simply taking his keys away is not enough.

This is a very contentious problem in my experience, because it means a loss of independence, and often, a move to an assisted living facility or the home of a family member. — *Retired Oregon Internist*

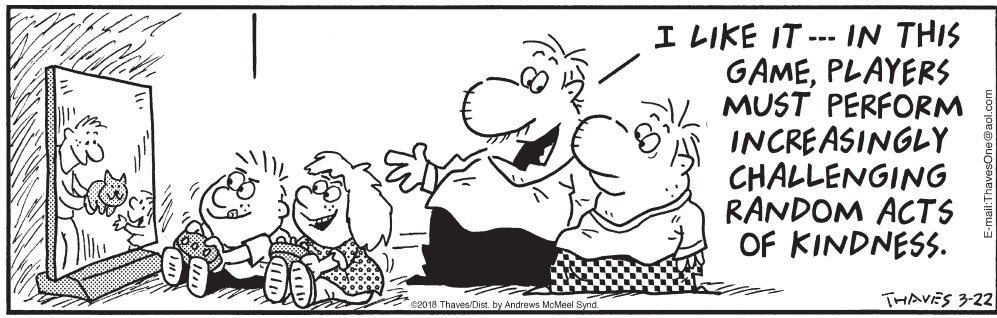
Dear Retired Oregon Internist: I should have been more emphatic about the importance of getting her grandfather a medical evaluation.

DEAR ANNIE

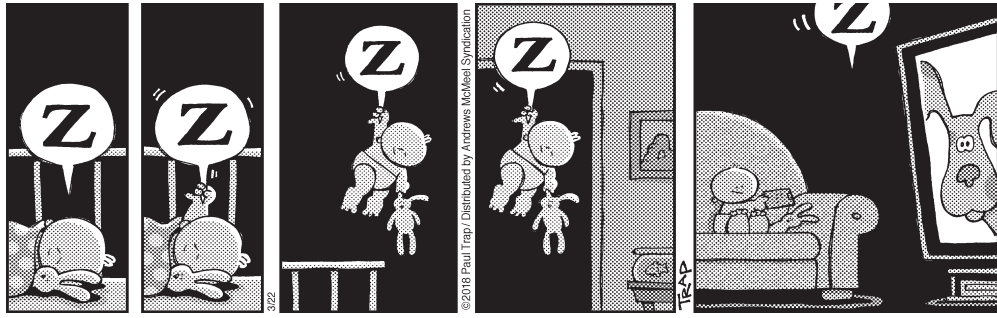


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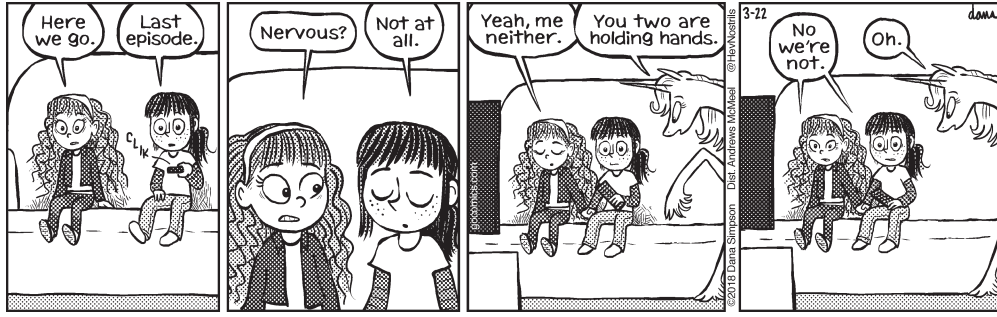
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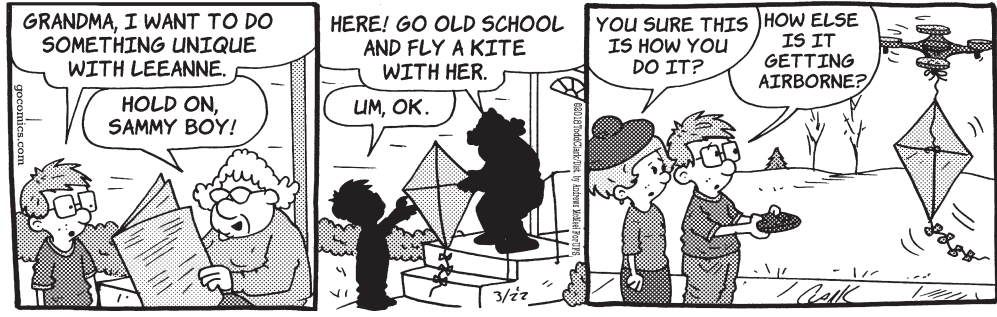
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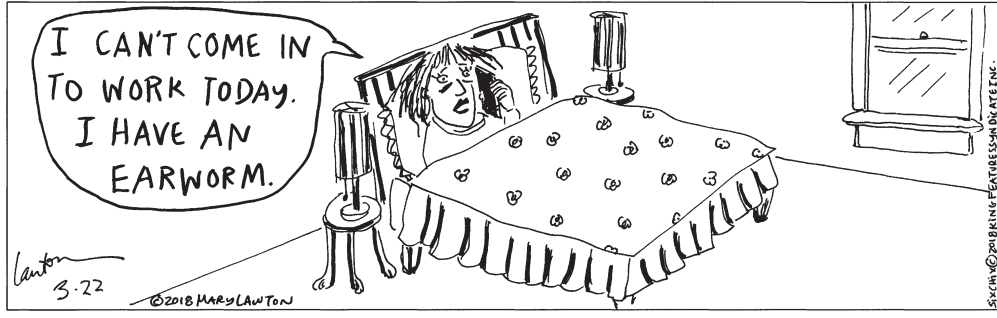
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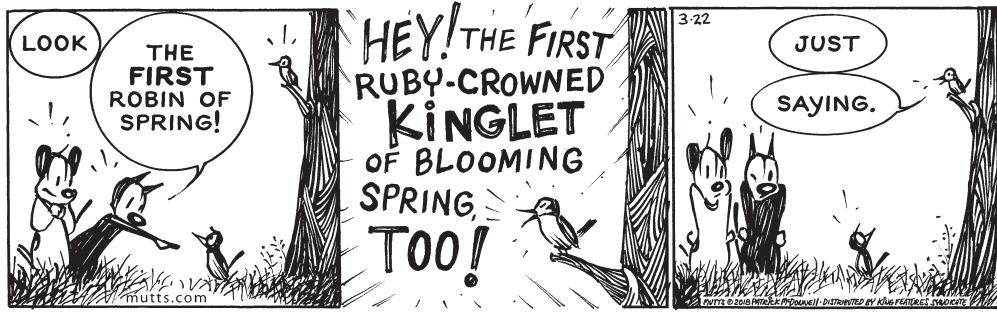
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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). While the boundaries you establish may simply be policy to you, there are some who will experience them as a personal affront. But as long as you're respectful, your boundaries won't be challenged.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The times are changing. You're dipping your foot into the new normal. It still scares some people, but that's why they need you to be strong. Do you. Get to know as many people as you can. And keep growing.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You can enhance your life by changing something simple, such as your diet or something logistical. Take, for instance, the time you spend getting to and from places. There's a way to make the commute pleasurable or shorter.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). So you made a wrong turn back there. That's a rare thing, but it happens to everyone. Review the mistake or misperception, because you're about to get another chance — and this time you're likely to nail it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Though you can relate to the lives of others, saying so won't help. The best way to support others is through careful, attentive listening. Make it all about the other person: No anecdote, advice or interjection will be necessary.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The work will only feel worthwhile to you if it's bringing you money, happiness or the chance to markedly improve yourself. If you can't readily see how the endeavor fits into one of those categories, bail.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). While trials and tribulations are an inevitable part of the growth cycle, they shouldn't be the norm. Someone who always seems to be at the heart of drama has the potential to snarl you into his or her orbit. Resist. You've better things to do.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It doesn't matter how many friends you have; you will still always be better off when you are also your own friend and champion. Also note: A person who cares for deeply for you will not side with a person who doesn't.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You may choose to forgive someone now — not because that person deserves mercy but because you no longer want to be mentally tied to a piece of history and therefore need to let it go.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). People seek your company and attention. The venue, dining and entertainment aspects don't matter all that much, so don't stress over such details. As long as it's not too loud to hear conversation, all will be well.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Love, peace, magic, joy — you can have all of that. You'll have to give up other things, though. What do you think they are? For some it's a false belief, e.g., that love is about suffering or that drama is better than happiness.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your internal voice may not make a peep detectable by microphones, but it can be deafeningly loud to you. It carries to far reaches of your internal universe. That's why it's so important to stay supportive when talking to yourself.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 23). It's the wonderful matches that make this solar return sing — the people who get you, the jobs that reward you at a deeper level and the lifestyle that curls supportively and securely around the core of who you are. Your outstanding work in August will build up both your reputation and your bank account. Virgo and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 2, 28, 4, 14 and 7.

BLONDIE

