

Others jump to conclusions

Dear Annie: This concerns unwanted reactions by others to my husband's and my medical problems. My husband has balance and coordination problems, for which we have been seeking answers for years. He sometimes stumbles or falls. I have experienced a degeneration in tendons of both hands and have been through surgery seven times. I'm wearing a cast as I write. Each prior surgery corrected a specific problem, but I have no answer for why my tendons keep breaking down with normal use of my hands. Three siblings of mine and some cousins also have had surgery for hand problems similar to mine.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Two questions for you. How can I relieve the distress of those who show sincere concern for our medical problems? And how can I kindly discourage the "blame the victim" mentality behind ignorant questions by those who doubt us and jump to wrong conclusions? Unfortunately, people who see my husband fall or see me in a hand brace feel very free about telling me, for example, to stop hitting my husband. The idea is so ludicrous

that I almost always laugh. My husband and I don't fight physically. If we disagree, we take time to cool off. Then we forgive each other and reason through our conflict. We have been married for 45 years and still consider ourselves to be best friends. — K.F.

Dear K.F.: Relieve the distress of those who show sincere concern by assuring them you have gotten great medical care and have sought second and third opinions (which I hope you have). As for the folks who say you should stop hitting your husband, you can say, "I don't, and spousal abuse is not a matter to treat so flippantly." The fact is that some people are always going to take flying leaps toward conclusions because it's their only mental recreation. Try not to let it get to you. You have your best friend by your side, and that's what really counts.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Drive Safely," which was about a movement to tap your horn when you see someone texting. I am highly sensitive to external stimuli, and in my world a horn means something else. It's a warning, not

a mechanism to pressure someone into other behavior. Given the number of idiots out there texting while driving, I would find this behavior extremely distracting. It would take my mind off my driving and cause me to look for the source of and reason for the beep. It's a reflex from almost 50 years of driving.

All states need to ban the use of cellphones while driving, period. Then police need to enforce the law. In Massachusetts, only texting is banned. It's hard to enforce. If all cellphone use were banned (except for hands-free), it would be easy to enforce the law. And I don't know what's taking so long. — No Cellphone for Me

Dear No Cellphone: You make a great point about how honking at a texting driver could startle other motorists. I agree that many states could use stronger laws regulating phone use and distracted driving. At this writing, only 16 states (along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam) prohibit all drivers from using hand-held cellphones while driving. And research has shown that even talking on a cellphone hands-free causes mental distraction. The safest option is foregoing all phone usage while operating a vehicle.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll be caught in the shuffle of shifting priorities and redistributed responsibility. Indecision at higher levels will influence your destiny. Even so, the main determinations of the day will be yours to make.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Emotions are invitations to greater strength and power. Every time you accept and stick with an emotion through its lifespan (which can last months or minutes), you increase your capacity to manage your feelings.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). What's left undone is left out of fear. There's no pleasant way to face it, but if you don't face it eventually, the result will be most unpleasant indeed. Come on. It won't be that bad. Just dive in and get it done.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). History has lessons it can only teach to the willing. The tendency is to say, "Well that was then; this is now." But the correlation will be rather obvious to the awake people of this class. It always repeats! Who's ready?

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You may engage in frivolous pursuits, but solving sartorial problems of the day isn't among them. Clothing choice matters. It requires thought and discernment. Dress for style and respect, not attention.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You speak kindly of yourself and those around you; say thank you and return favors; and make time for those who need a friend. These quality habits will be their own reward, and yet other rewards spring forth, too.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are those who can't help but think in terms of finding a scapegoat. To own up to their own faults would cause unbearable shame. They fear being cut off for their mistakes. But mistakes are lessons, not death sentences.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The most ingenious comment in the world repeated over and over in an annoying tone will start to sound like idiocy. Even the brightest insights come across as wrongheaded to those predisposed to think of them as such.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The new rule of thumb for those seeking to reach their maximum attractiveness quotient is to cultivate at least three hobbies that do not involve a screen. Energy spent in this direction will quickly repay you.

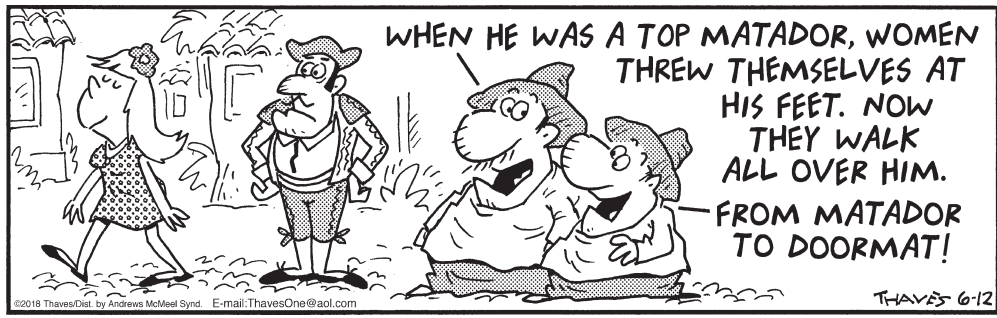
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Teenagers aren't the only ones prone to thinking that a problem is the worst thing ever in one moment and then in the next moment finding that it's not even worth thinking about. This is a human thing. Bear with it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It is said that essence and life cannot be seen, but today you feel like you can see it — and hear it and dance to it. Furthermore, there are certain people and places that occur to you like springs, gushing pure vitality.

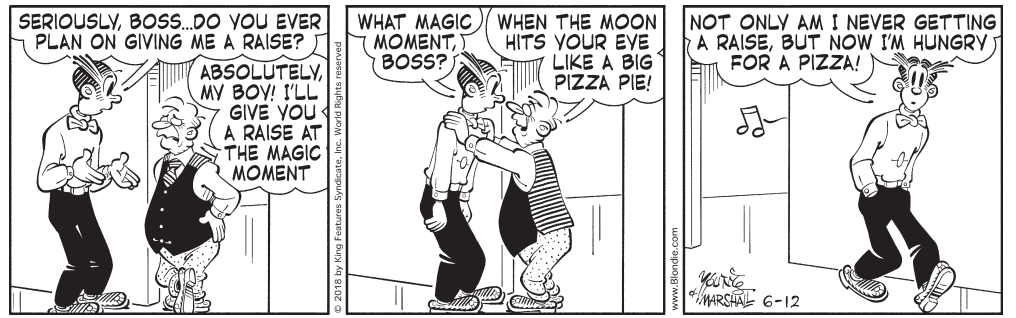
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Thanks to internet search engines it's easier to know what millions of people around the world think about a subject than it is to ask your own mom. But ask your own mom (or maternal influence) anyway.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (June 13). An encouraging group of friends will help you make a personal goal. The time you devote to work will ramp up over the next 10 weeks. Professional gains in 2019 will reflect a jump in experience level. You'll get a bonus. Stash it away for a major purchase. Travel and moves are favored in October and May. Aries and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 12, 14, 30 and 45.

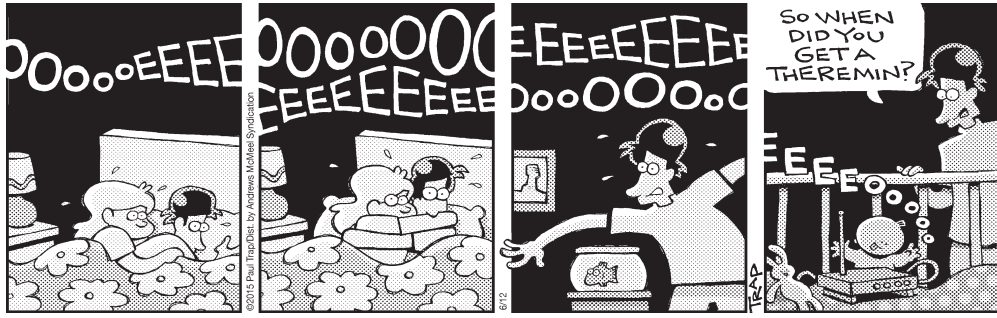
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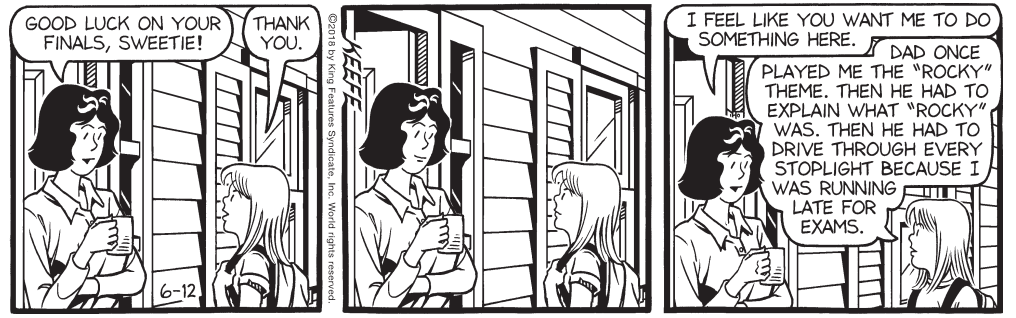
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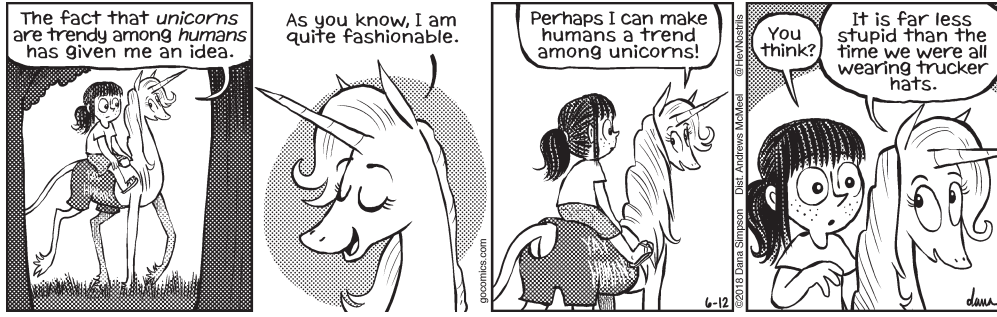
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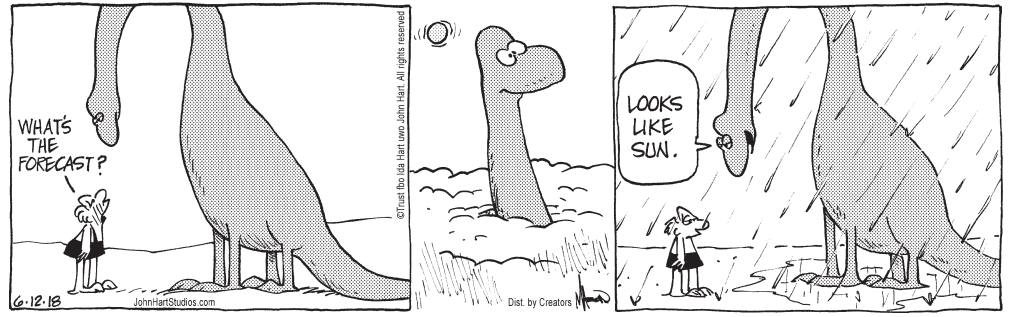
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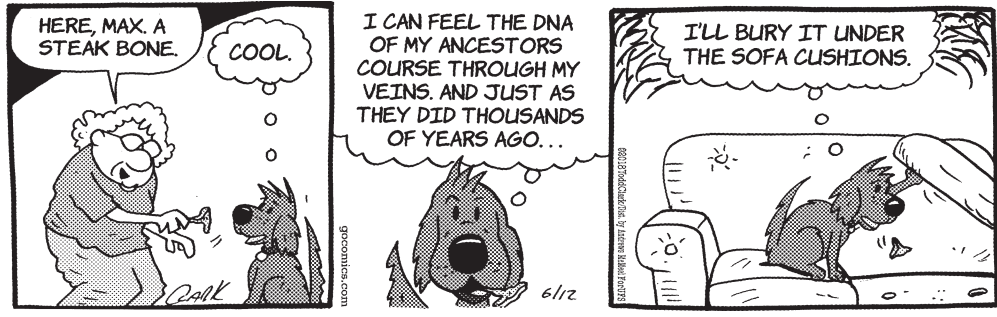
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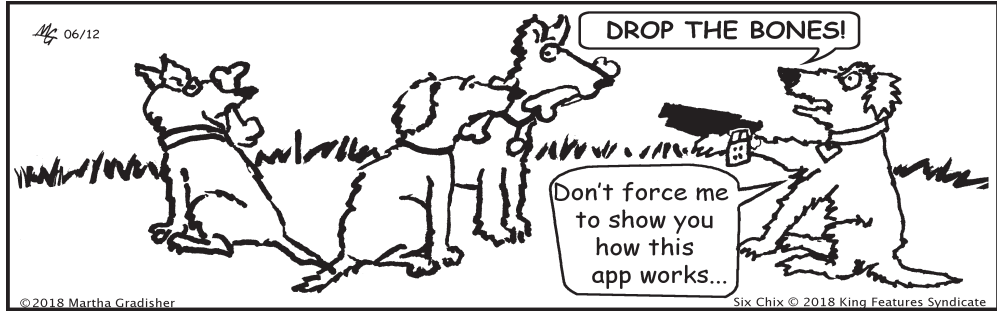
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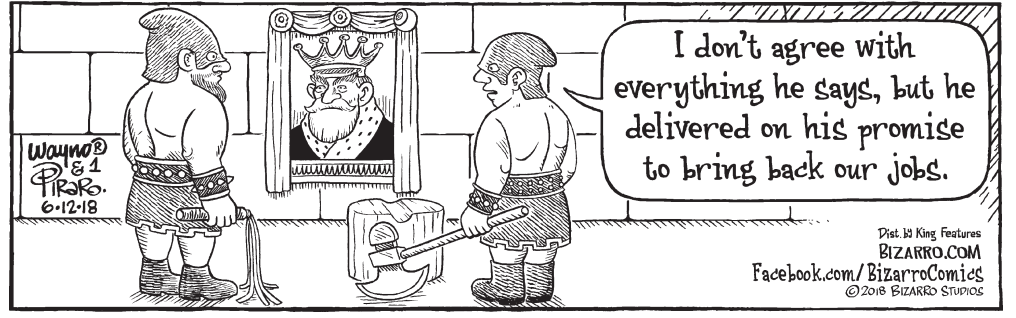
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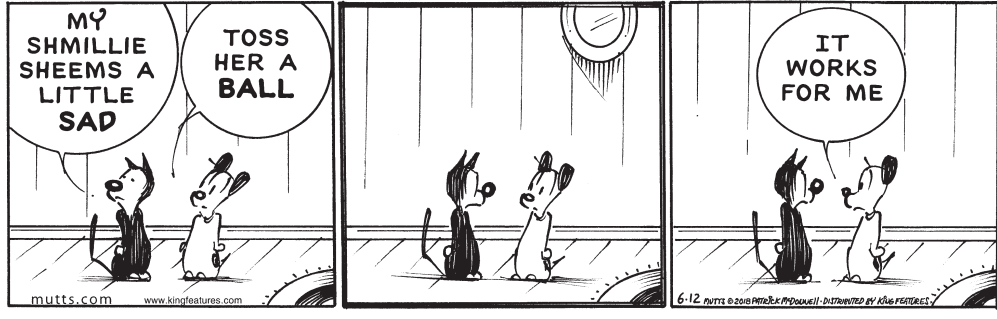
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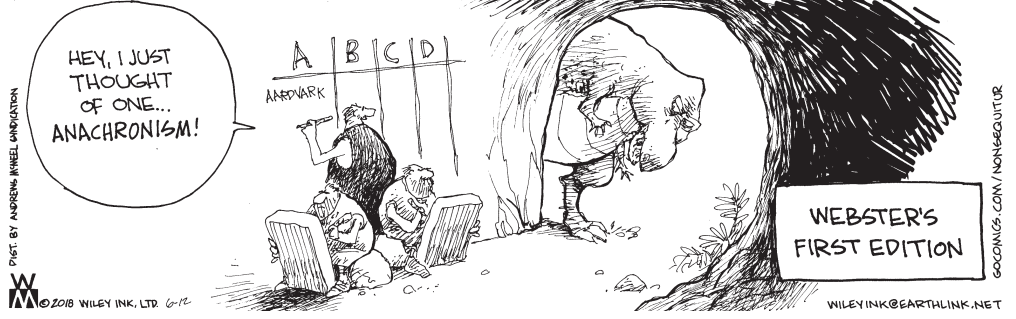
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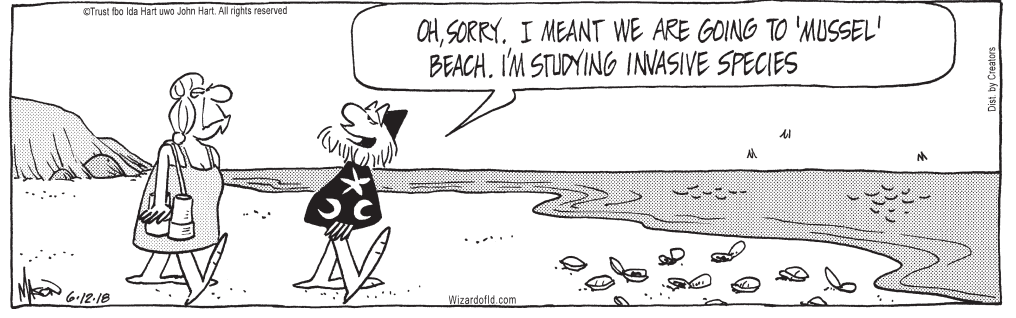
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