

# Brother says she's a hoarder

**Dear Annie:** I am feeling so desperate, angry and frustrated. I deal with depression, and my brother is certainly not helping matters. I am 65. I cannot do a lot of lifting because of back problems, so I wait for my grandkids to come and help me when they can, which is not so often as I'd like.

My brother thinks I am a hoarder. He tells me that I have obsessive-compulsive disorder and that I need to deal with my problems. My brother is an alcoholic but does go to Alcoholics Anonymous and has not imbibed for over 20 years. Every time we get together, he is rude and sarcastic and will not stop the conversation when I tell him that he is not my counselor and that my issues are my business and not his.

I do not feel that I'm a hoarder by any means. I will admit that I have accumulated things over the years and that this has gotten out of hand, but my home is not filthy or toxic. My downstairs area is not accessible at this time because I have been sorting through my things. I have taken

several bags to The Salvation Army. I have thrown many things away. And some of the items I've kept will be set up for a rummage sale this summer. If these items do not sell, they are going. This is not good enough for my brother.

I was going to my own counselor, but she retired at the end of April. She was awestruck with some of the things that my brother has said and done. Now he wants us to go to counseling. The problem is that I'm so tired of his abuse that I just don't want to be around him anymore. My brother has no concept of what personal boundaries are. What is your response to all of this? — *Want Peace Back in My Life*

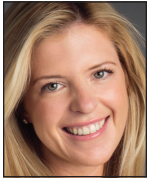
**Dear Want Peace:** You are right that these are your issues, not your brother's. He might be trying to help, but forcing his version of help upon you clearly isn't helping anyone. The good news is that it doesn't matter too much if he has no concept of personal boundaries, because the person who sets your boundar-

ies is you. You get to decide how often you talk to your brother and how many of his comments you take to heart. Peace is within your power.

That being said, it does sound as though clutter is getting in the way of your life. Your items have rendered a floor of your house inaccessible, and you admit that it's gotten out of hand. If you have a desire to address that issue, you don't have to wait until your children or grandchildren come by to help. Consider hiring a personal organizer or senior move manager to sort out your belongings and move things into storage. You can also call a junk removal service for the items you have no use for.

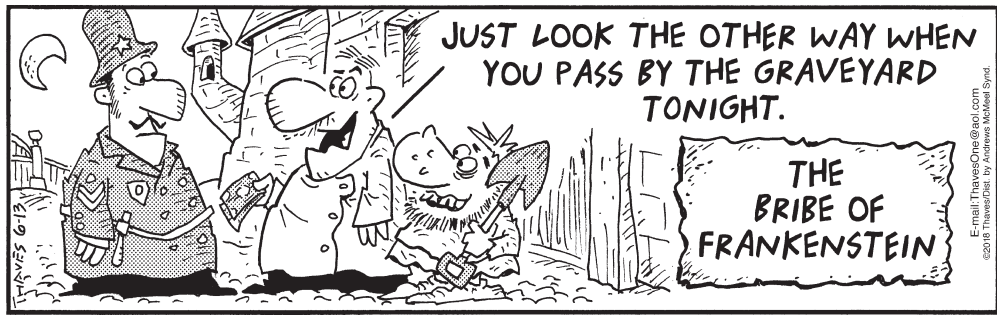
Even more important than addressing your clutter, however, is treating and managing your depression. Your therapist should have referred you to someone else when she retired. Follow up with her for some names. If you can't get in touch with her, the American Psychological Association offers a psychologist locator tool on its website. Psychology Today offers a similar tool: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists>.

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



## THATABABY



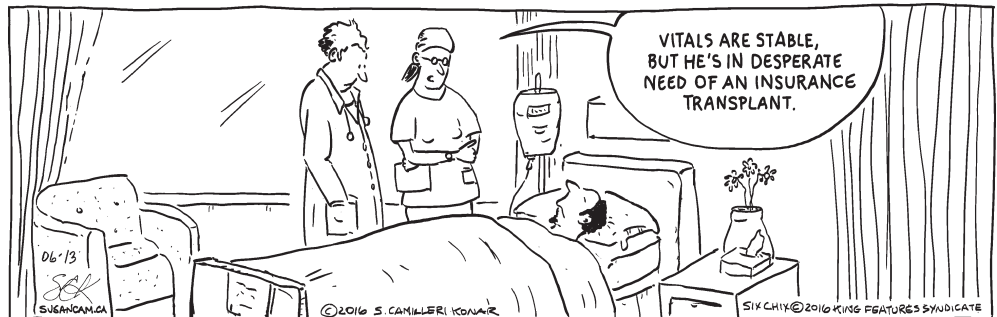
## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



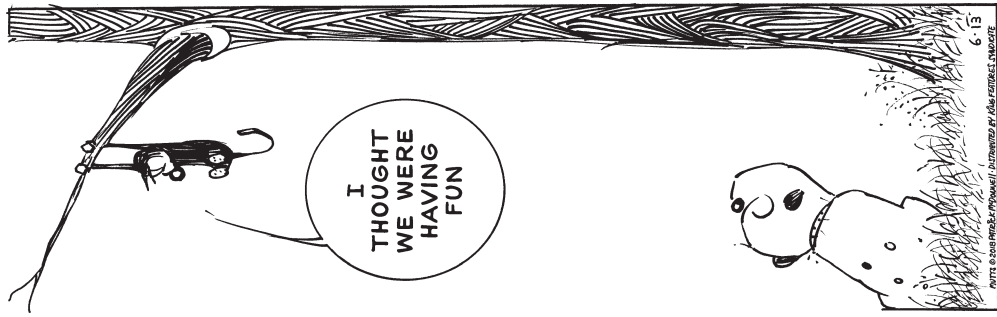
## LOLA



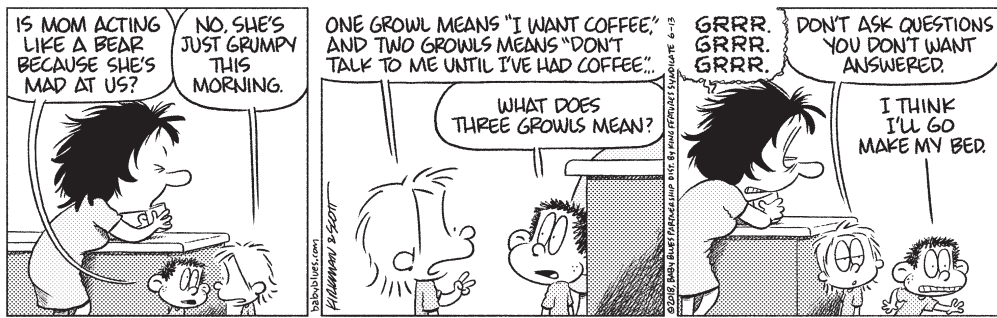
## SIX CHIX



## MUTTS



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** This thing you want to do — you're not totally prepared for it, nor will you ever be. Go on anyway. No one else was prepared when they started this either. All of the insiders had similar feelings to the ones you're having right now.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** It's an excellent day to strictly reject the extreme limits that people will claim exist. They'll say, "Impossible." They'll say, "Never." How do they know? It's better to err on the side of optimistic fantasy and possibility.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Many scientists believe that early humans made music before they could make speech, and that love songs were part of our primal culture. Whether or not that's true, today you'll be deeply moved and bonded by a melody.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** To give something a name is to claim it in some way. Try this with your feelings today and you'll create a bridge between emotion and thought, closing the problematic gap that was keeping you from moving forward.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Everyone has the same 24 hours in a day. Those who say, "I don't have time," are really saying, "This is not a priority to me right now," which is a more empowering bit of language both to hear and to say.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** The occurrence you don't find ideal, and possibly think of as terrible, may actually be the best thing happening in your life right now. It's strengthening you, and it's also saving you in some way.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** You'll try and enjoy the unfolding moment. And when you can't seem to quite get there, you'll still be able to go along, knowing that the big picture is coming together nicely and you'll appreciate all of this later.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** If something won't bother you a month from now, don't let it bother you now. If it won't please you a month from now, don't buy it, commit to it or do it now. Use the perspective of time in your decision-making process.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** A conflict-free life is so pleasant! Of course, there's no story there. Stories need conflict. If you happen to get friction instead of an easy life today, rejoice in the knowledge that it'll be something people want to hear about.

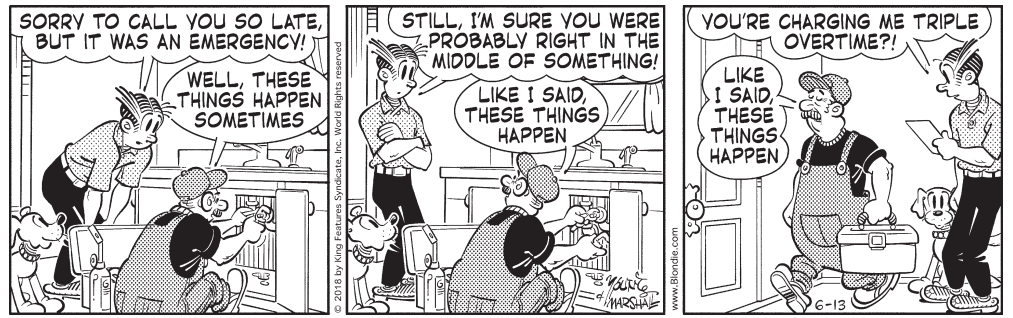
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** The appearance of confidence is often indistinguishable from actual confidence. Both states will produce similar results. So however you feel, put on your brave face and go forward.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** What is best for all? With so many different people spouting various opinions, the question seems complex — until you realize that most people are speaking out of self-interest. Who is really after the good of the group?

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Education can be extremely expensive, or it can be free. Those who have access to a library or the internet have access to the top minds that have ever lived. You've an excellent reason to take advantage of this.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (June 14).** People think highly of you and will promote you in ways you will love and also be slightly challenged by, as it sets up an expectation. Don't worry: You'll get there, with the same optimism and dedication you used to arrive at the place you are right now. You'll discover treasure in July. Your legacy will expand in September. Cancer and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 30, 18, 33 and 28.

## BLONDIE



## SALLY FORTH

