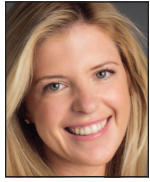


Not yet ready to quit smoking

Dear Annie: My girlfriend (of a year) and I are both in our mid-20s and are both smokers. In fact, that's how we met — on the smoking patio of a bar, both out there alone because none of the friends we were there with smoked. We've both always talked tentatively about quitting, but in a vague way. So I was surprised when last week my girlfriend announced she was quitting cold turkey. She asked whether I wanted to quit at the same time so we could offer each other moral support. I'm happy to offer moral support, but I'm not quite ready to quit. Do I have an obligation to her to quit? Is it wrong for me to smoke around her now? I've been thinking about purchasing an e-cigarette and just doing that around her, because this seems like a healthier alternative. — *Guilty Smoker*

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

smoking today, you can undo a good deal of that damage. According to a 2013 study by Dr. Prabhat Jha, director of the Centre for Global Health Research at St. Michael's Hospital, "quitting smoking before age 40, and preferably well before 40, gives back almost all of the decade of lost life from continued smoking." That doesn't mean you should keep lighting up through your 39th year, however. Jha adds: "Former smokers still have a greater risk of dying sooner than people who never smoked. But the risk is small compared to the huge risk for those who continue to smoke."

As for e-cigarettes, the American Lung Association writes: "We don't presently know what is in e-cigarettes. However, in initial lab tests conducted in 2009 the FDA found detectable levels of toxic cancer-causing chemicals, including an ingredient used in anti-freeze, in two leading brands of e-cigarettes and 18 various cartridges. ... A 2014 study found that aerosol from e-cigarettes ... contains ... formaldehyde." In other words, e-cigarettes contain cancer-causing chemicals and addictive nicotine. Why substitute one crummy

habit with another?

Now, I know that my haranguing is not great motivation. But look at the long list of benefits of quitting smoking and try to find something that does motivate you. For more information, visit <http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking>.

Dear Annie: I can definitely sympathize with "Unsure in Texas," who wrote to you about getting invitations to graduations, birthday parties and weddings from people she doesn't know well. My husband and I received an invitation to an open house from our financial adviser. Not only do we not know him personally but also we were referred to him when our financial adviser retired approximately two years ago. My husband brought up an interesting question: Do you think he would still provide us with good advice if we were not to attend and provide a gift for his daughter? My thought was that it was very tacky to send us the invitation. — *Stuck in a Predicament in Indiana*

Dear Stuck in a Predicament: I highly doubt your financial adviser would start giving you worse advice because you didn't attend his open house. If he made business that personal, he wouldn't be in business for long.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The more fun you have, the more effective you'll be with the serious work of the day. The improvisational spirit of play will be entwined with the mysterious magic of intuition.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The way you mirror people will be flattering because you have your "flattering" lens on: It's a mindset that helps you see positive qualities in others. You'll see them how they want to be seen and beyond.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Socializing has its challenges, and maybe that's what makes it fun for you today. You'll overcome social obstacles, earn trust and create rapport with someone who doesn't open up easily.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Because you don't walk around thinking about creating a legacy that will live beyond you, you're totally unaware of how your mood, behavior and actions are making a difference in the lives of others.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Hone the ability to manage expectations. If you can paint an enticing but accurate picture of what's to come, this will help everyone to maximize what's there and avoid being disappointed by what isn't.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Know your audience. Read the room. These are show business tropes that will apply in every area of life today. Getting it right in your own head is satisfying, but it's nothing compared with winning "the room."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's an effort to challenge yourself, but it's a delight to intrigue yourself. What if you looked at the goal with more curiosity? There's a magic mix of determination and curiosity that could lift your attitude about this.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You can begin again, now and now and now. Any day — any time of day — is a valid starting point for doing the thing you want to do and being who you want to be.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It will take you a few minutes to warm up to new situations today, and that only proves that you're humble enough to realize that strangers are never kings; however, they may be made to feel that way by gracious hosts.

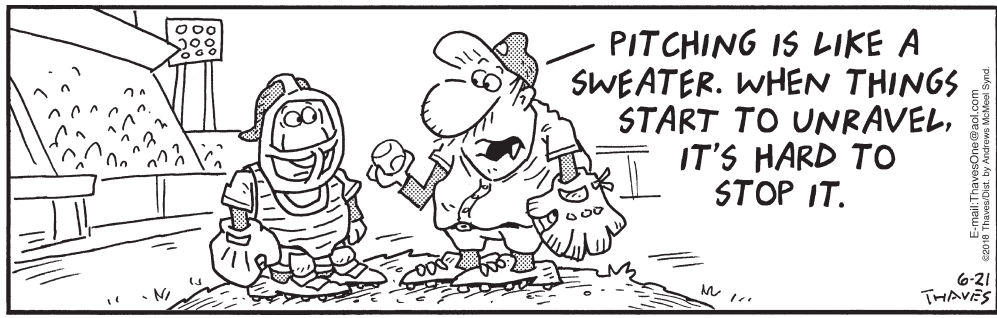
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Most people are not conscious of what it takes to move between states of mood and mind, but the more aware you are of this, the better. People get comfortable in their own ways and processes. Whatever yours is, it's OK.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Keep moving. If you hang out in any environment for too long today, you'll get bored and your thoughts will be vulnerable to looping — not always a terrible thing, but it depends on the thought.

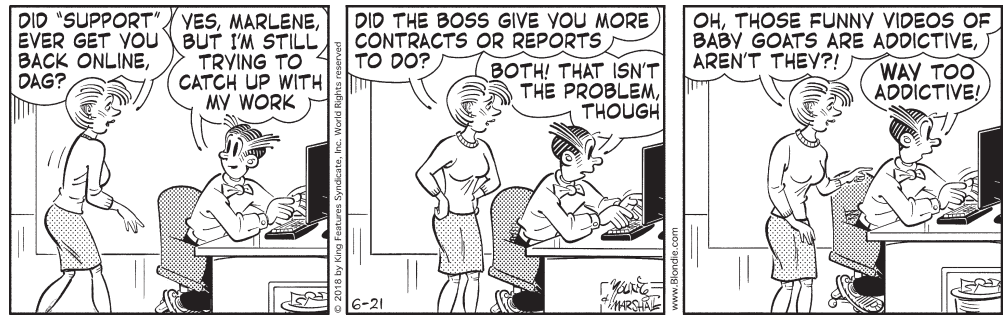
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The cosmic nudges don't come from out of the blue. They happen mid-pursuit — when you have some information but not all the information you need. To get another clue or develop a hunch you'll have to investigate a little further.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (June 22). Arrange your life around what delights you. That may seem like a stretch — something you might have been able to manage when you were younger but not now that your responsibilities have changed. And yet, there really is a way to make your own happiness more central to your being. You will find it this year! Libra and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 30, 3, 33, 28 and 45.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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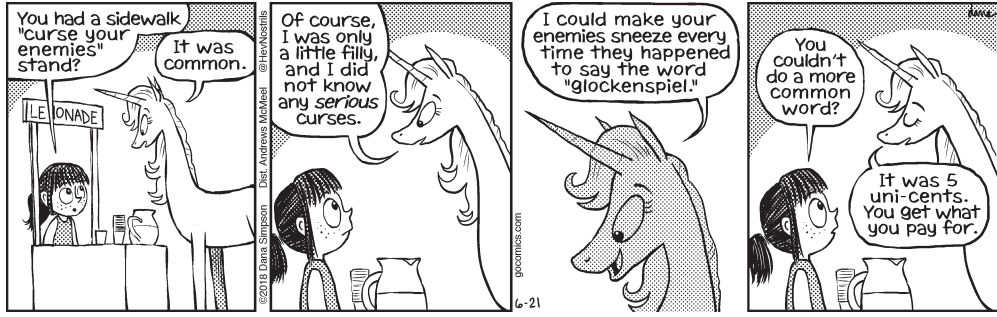
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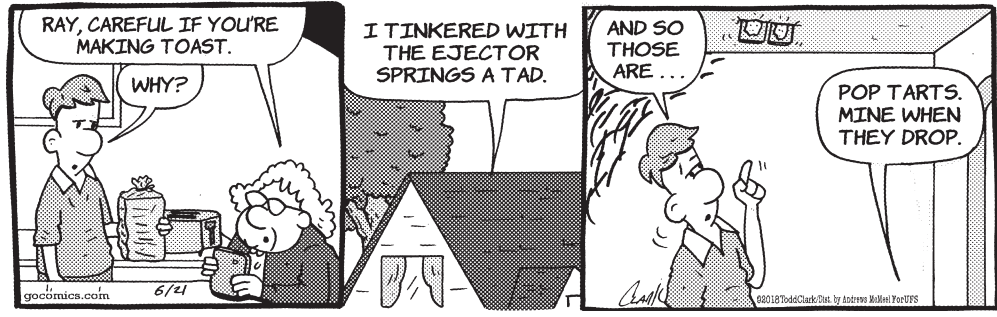
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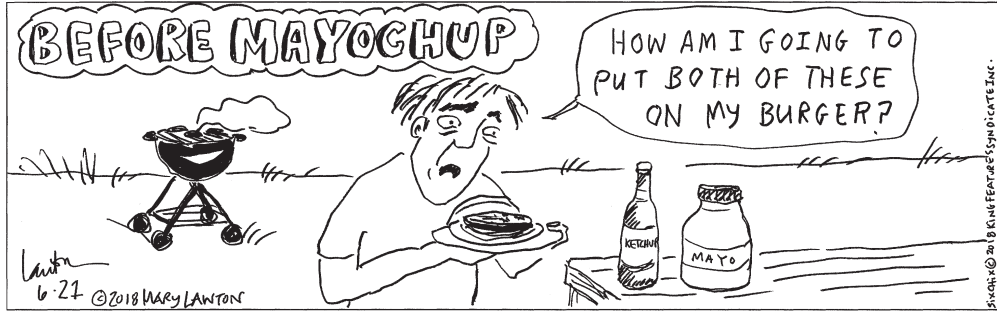
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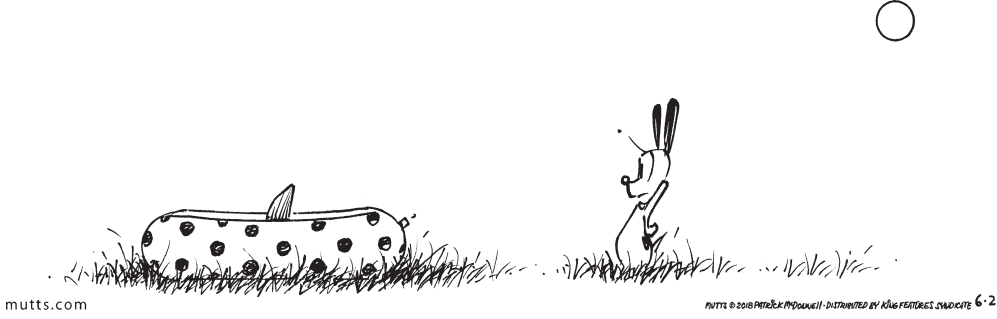
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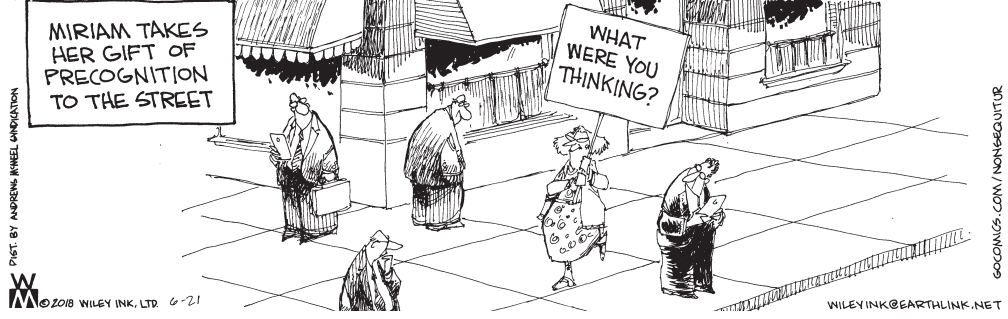
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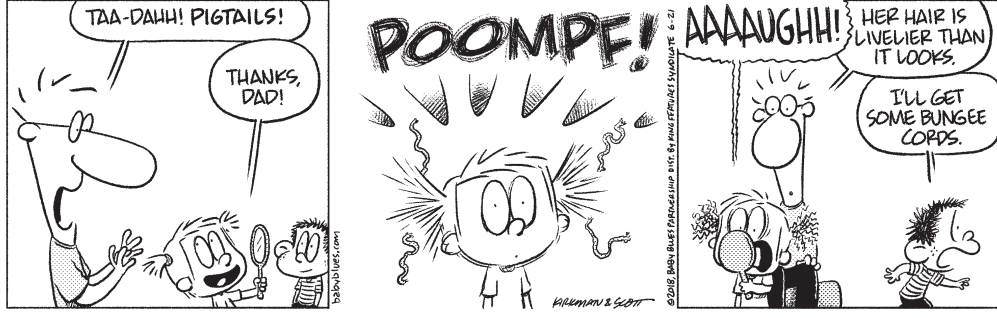
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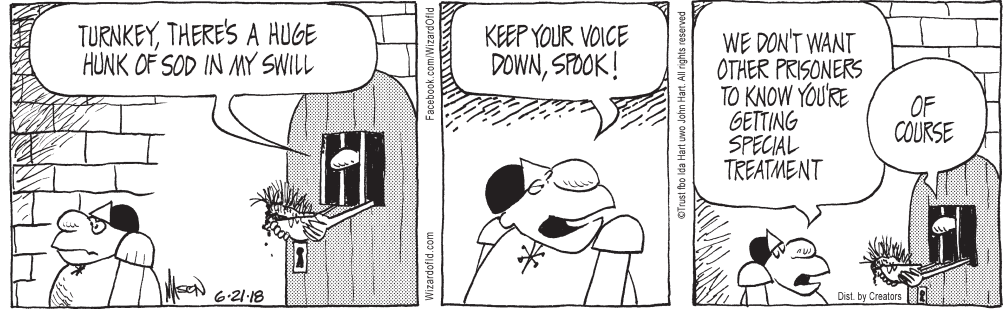
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