

An acquaintance in need

Dear Annie: An acquaintance from the local golf course, where we both play every week, told me he has prostate cancer. Although he went into far more detail about the discovery, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment options than I wanted to hear, I listened and expressed my sympathy.

Three weeks later, I saw him again. He said he was angry with me because I had not called him. "Friends look out for each other," he said.

The truth is that this guy is just an acquaintance, not a friend. We really don't have much in common, and I don't want a closer relationship. At the same time, I recognize he is in need of emotional support right now. — *Now What?*

Dear Now What: It sounds as though this man could use some emotional support, but you're not the person to give it. Even if you forced yourself, you might end up feeling resentful or pulling away, and that would only make the situation worse. Instead, refer him to other resources. You can find a database of support programs and services in your area on the Amer-

ican Cancer Society's website (<https://www.cancer.org/treatment/support-programs-and-services.html>). With a cancer diagnosis come a whole range of complex emotions, which your acquaintance is no doubt struggling with. Try to be patient. Though you don't have to be his best friend, you'll never regret being compassionate.

Dear Annie: After reading the letters from "Tired of the Tips" and "Yes, I Have Tried Excedrin," who suffer from migraines and don't want to hear any more "helpful tips" from well-meaning friends, I'd like to offer another point of view. I, too, suffer from migraines, and I occasionally receive "new medical information" from friends. Though it's never actually been helpful as far as relieving my migraine pain goes, I appreciate that these people are showing concern for my well-being. I wouldn't want them to get the impression (which they might get from the aforementioned letters) that they deserve ridicule for their thoughtfulness. — *Another Migraine Sufferer*

Dear Another Migraine Sufferer: The intention was not to ridicule so much as to point out that unsolicited advice, however well-intentioned, can rub the recipient the wrong way, especially regarding health issues. But I really appreciate your letter, because you're right. Looking at things differently can make all the difference. And sometimes it's best to just take loved ones' unsolicited advice as a sign of their love — whether or not we actually take the advice.

Dear Annie: I liked your response to "Workplace Drama," who wrote about a co-worker who had a double mastectomy and is extremely upset about "Workplace Drama's" still having breasts. But I would like to add that her co-worker's complaint is so bizarre that I think her co-worker should go back to see her oncologist and have a brain scan. Breast cancer can metastasize to the brain, and it's possible that this fixed idea is related to a spreading of the cancer. — *M.D. in Montreal*

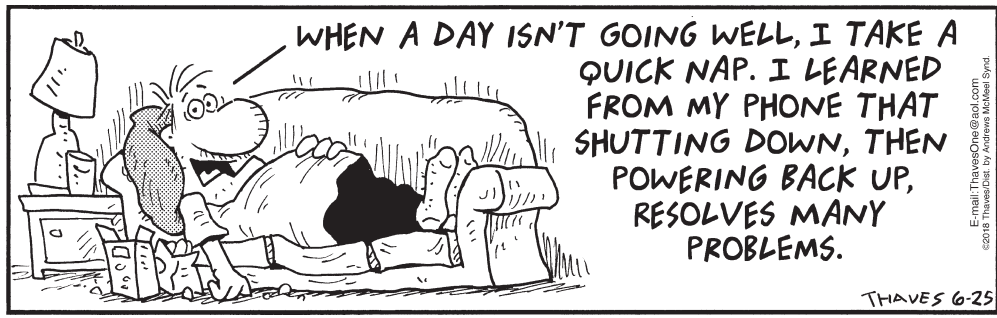
Dear M.D.: That is a possibility I never would have considered. And it's another example of why I am so grateful when doctors write in and share their expertise. Thank you. I've forwarded your message to "Workplace Drama."

DEAR ANNIE

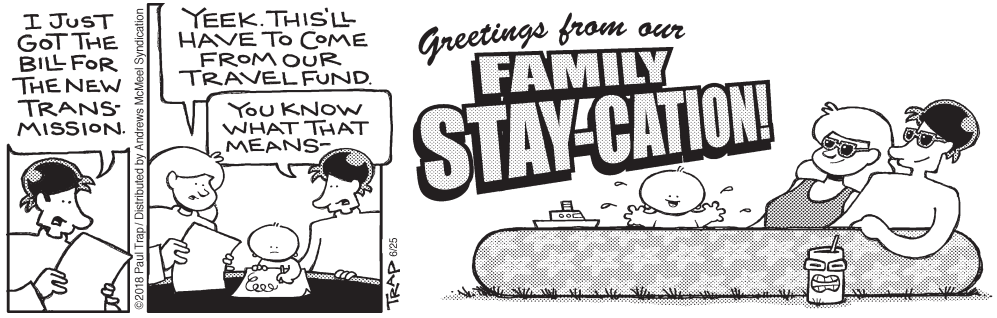


Annie Lane
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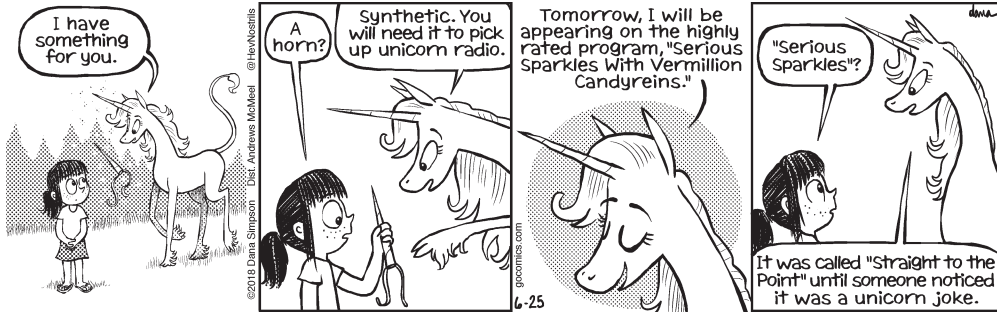
FRANK AND ERNEST



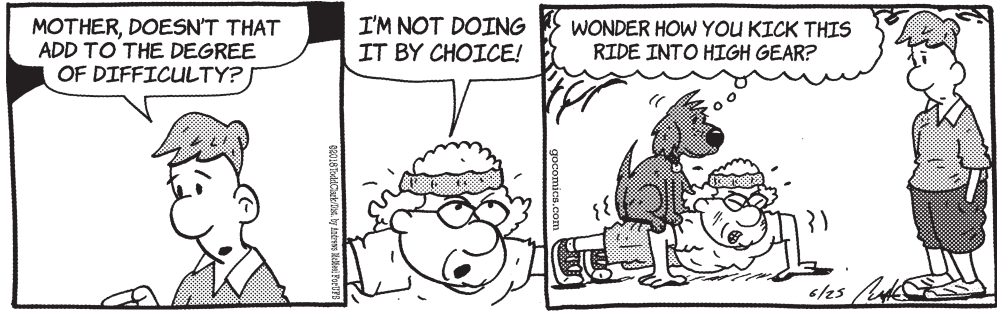
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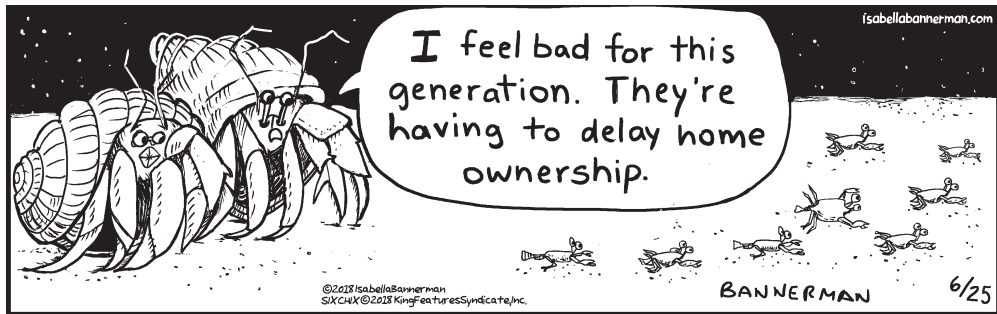
PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



LOLA



SIX CHIX



MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Work on your skills. No matter how talented you are, you need the skills to back it up, and those skills will take you much, much further than natural ability ever could.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). When the best idea comes along, the others just don't look the same anymore. They pale in comparison. You'll know it when you see it, and once you do, you can't unsee it. There's no going back.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'd often rather pay a little more for the monthly cost than get the discount of the yearly subscription. Why? Flexibility has value. You hate feeling trapped! This applies across the board today.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You may acquire the winning formula and soundly disagree with it, or seek wise counsel and then do the exact opposite. Ultimately, you want to become a better you, not an effective clone of some other successful person.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Never doubt your power. Don't lie down. Castles are built one brick at a time. Build a little the best you can every day and one day you'll have a beautiful creation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Though you're not out to get any special attention, someone sees you for who you really are — and will also happen to choose the perfect moment to let you know this.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It will be almost impossible to sell an idea to someone who has to first admit being wrong about it before. You'll graciously let someone save face, or gloss over your differences in the name of moving forward.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The movie heroes control their emotions, which is part of the

appeal. If only we could all handle stress like James Bond with the fate of the world hanging in the balance. But you won't be so far off from that today.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Instead of solving one kind of problem, what if you trained your mind to adapt to any circumstance? Optimism — to look for opportunity no matter what and to believe it's there — is what will help you.

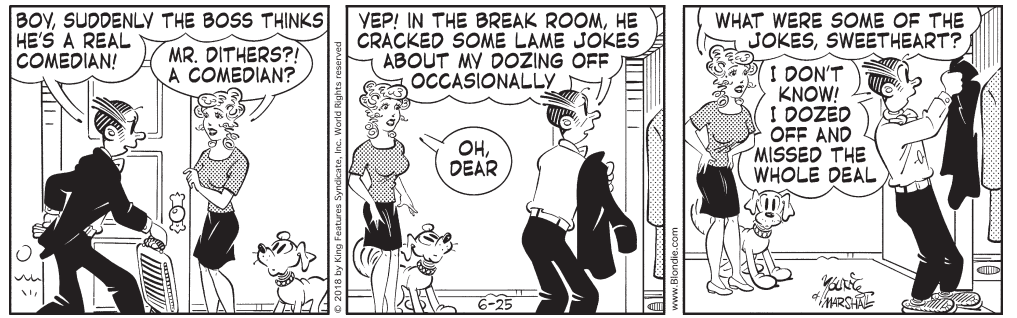
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Butterflies in the stomach are related to a primal fight-or-flight response, but don't take them as a bad sign. Go on and deal with the daunting circumstance at hand: It's the gateway to a positive change!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll work hard; that's a given. But there's such a thing as overworking it, too. This thing you're dealing with could use a different approach. Step back. Look at it sideways. Ask around. There's got to be a better way.

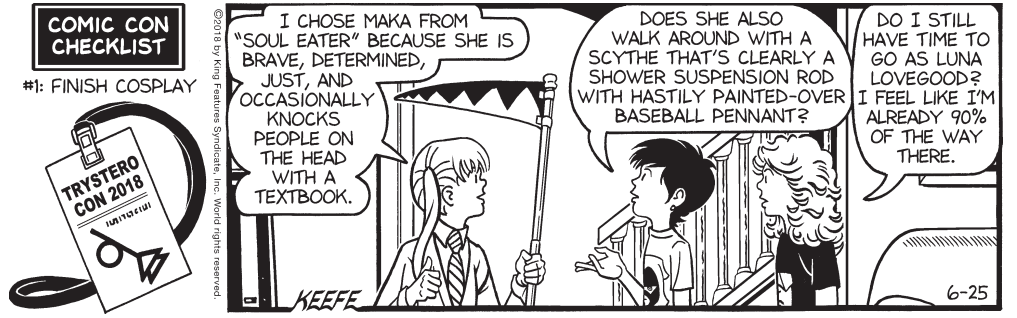
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Love changes. Anyone who's had relationships knows that feeling less euphoric and amorous than you did at the beginning of a relationship is the norm. But there are more highlights to come. Hang in there.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (June 26). You will develop your inner values much like you develop your physique: Through repetition and training, you become strong. You'll build on what you once saw as a fault but have come to recognize as a talent. Professional advancement at first won't seem to be. In 2019, you'll lose dead weight. Life becomes a dance. Aquarius and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 30, 33, 4 and 18.

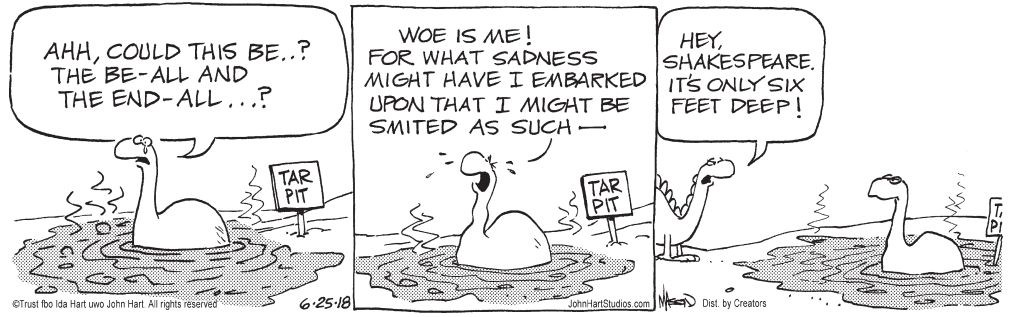
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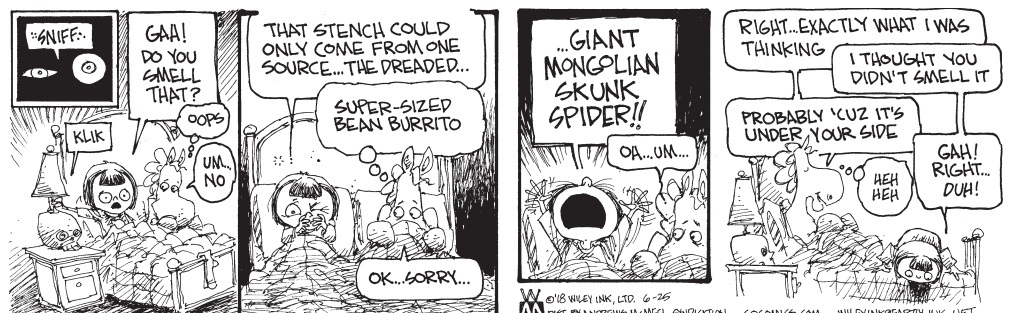
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