

Phone etiquette is missing

Dear Annie: It's important to have etiquette on the phone, no matter to whom you are speaking. When you take the time to call someone but the person is preoccupied, talks over you or doesn't say "excuse me" when someone in the room is speaking to him or her while you're on the phone, it's only normal to want to end the call. This has been happening to me with several family members for pretty much my whole life. I have finally started speaking up about how much it bothers me, only to be told, "Well, if someone is talking to me, what do you want me to do?" or "If I'm needed, what do you want me to do?" I tell these people to say "excuse me" or that we should talk another time. This happened to me today, and I said, "I can't do this anymore." Then I hung up.

Another pet peeve of mine is talking to someone who parrots back the information. I have asked my family members so many times to not do a play-by-play on the phone, but it hasn't helped. It is a huge hardship and can be completely depressing and stressful to call. Because it's family, you just

know that it will never end if it hasn't by now.

So to the families and friends guilty of this: You know who you are. Please be considerate when you are on the phone with someone.

What do you say, Annie? — *No More Calls for Me*

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Dear No More Calls:

In a perfect world, everyone would give undivided attention in all phone calls. Unfortunately, that is not the case, so we must be a little more forgiving when a family member or friend either talks over us or responds to an in-person request. You've already told your family members how you feel. You could either stay angry with them, allowing yourself to be stressed out and depressed about it, or accept them as they are and continue to remind them of your pet peeves, all the while appreciating the fact that they are still picking up the phone and speaking to you instead of just texting or becoming incommunicado altogether.

Dear Annie: One thing "Charlie," who is frustrated by how difficult it is to hear dialogue above background music, could do to help

differentiate the dialogue from the music is turn on his closed captioning. That way, he could even watch TV with the sound completely down and still enjoy the program if someone is sleeping or he wants quiet for another reason.

I have a nearly deaf sister and grew up with closed captioning on all the time. I grew to like it, so I kept it on at my own house after I married. My husband doesn't really care, but my daughters (both fully hearing) prefer "the TV with the words below." They are both (and have always been) exceptional readers for their age, and I have come to believe that seeing the written words associated with the spoken words as young children helped this. I don't know that closed captioning had a direct effect, but I highly suspect it.

And look at it this way: What harm could it do? — *Vancouver, Wash.*

Dear Vancouver: I'm a fan of closed captioning myself. Though not everyone likes having to read along while watching, I've found that in general, people adapt pretty quickly. I never thought of the benefit it might have for children's literacy, but that's a fascinating idea. Thanks for writing.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). There are many reasons you "should" be happy. But reasons you "should" be happy are not reasons you are. You cannot feel happiness by other people's standards. Accept your feelings; they are the bottom line on the matter.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Any effort to make yourself feel accepted, comfortable and soothed internally, and generally happy, will be well worth the effort. After all, how can you radiate a beautiful aura while feeling dark on the inside?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll spend many hours of highly focused attention on productive and practical activities so that by evening it may feel like you have very little psychic energy to invest on your loved ones. Then love will repower you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your water sign nature will help you get comfortable with the changes that come today. You'll be the boat, uniquely poised between two worlds, part in the ocean and part above it, ready to ride it out.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Every generation thinks they are misunderstood by the generation before them and underappreciated by the generation behind them. When feelings arise on this topic, just know that they're shared by all ages.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). With so many people around you who need you, you have to be convinced to be selfish these days. Just don't forget that you're a person, too, and you can't give what you don't have. Replenish yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Visible reality is not the boss of you. But neither is the unseen world. Both will try to entice you, order you around, tell you what to want, how to feel. Get

your balance between the two so you can stand your own ground.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Pretend you're an actor who can disengage yourself from the role at will. Step outside of it for a moment to figure out how best to play this. With a little detachment, you'll notice something about the plot you didn't before.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll help to assemble a group. Logistics and practicalities must be handled. Also consider, though there may be room in the room for all of the people, is there also room for their egos?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You can call on your talent to win the hour, but it won't win the day. That can't be won alone. Teamwork is the way. You'll use your social intelligence to trust, empathize and make the fair move.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Theories can only live in their own fictional world and are best either contained there or put into practice. There's a fine line between a theory that has never been tested and a lie.

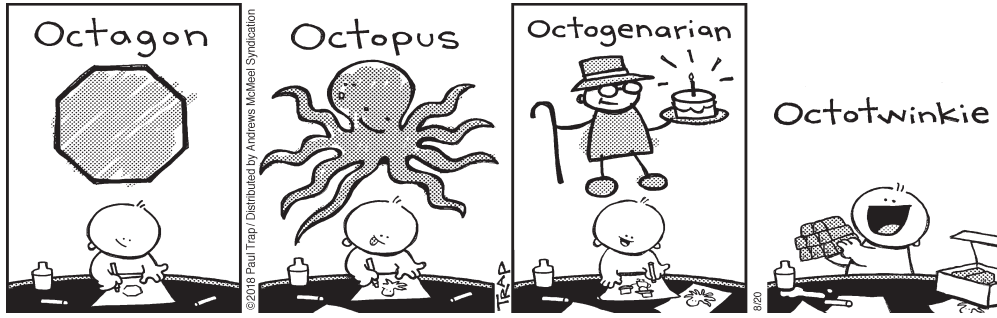
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). In the past, your sensitivity and empathy were exploited, but these are still among your most precious gifts to the world. Don't be afraid to use them, but do use them with a bit more discernment.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 21). This year represents your reaching a new comfort level within yourself, which comes across in a pleasant, friendly manner. Some will say you're flirting with the world. As you appreciate what's special about you, others see it, too, and put your talents to work. Financially and emotionally, the next 12 months are fantastic. Sagittarius and Taurus adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 2, 10, 40 and 38.

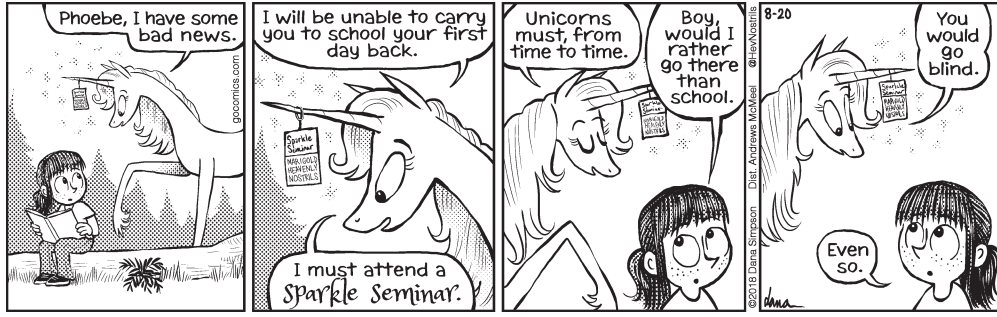
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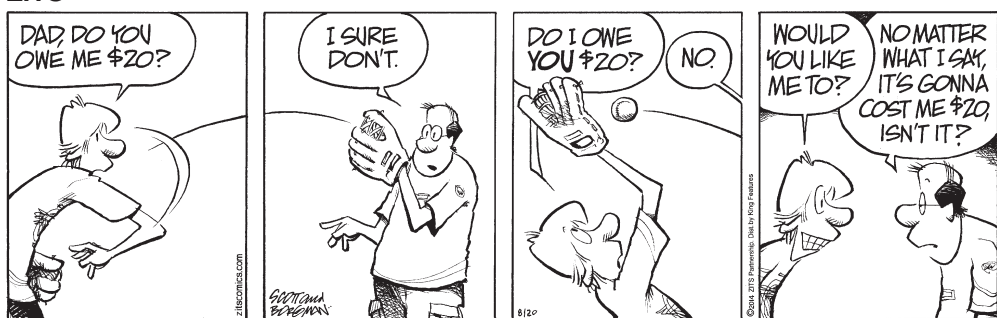
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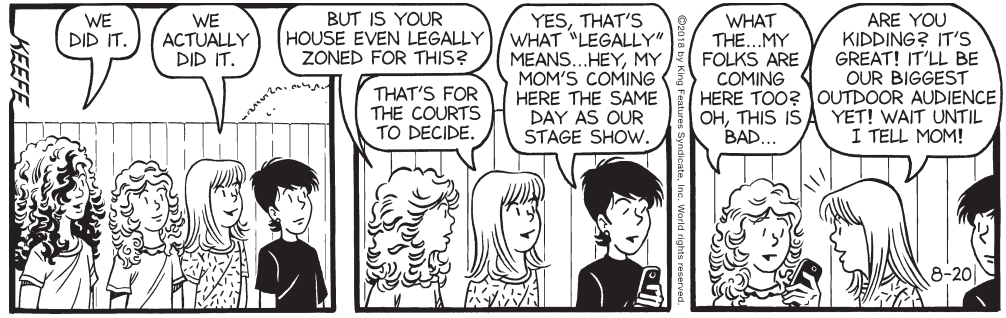
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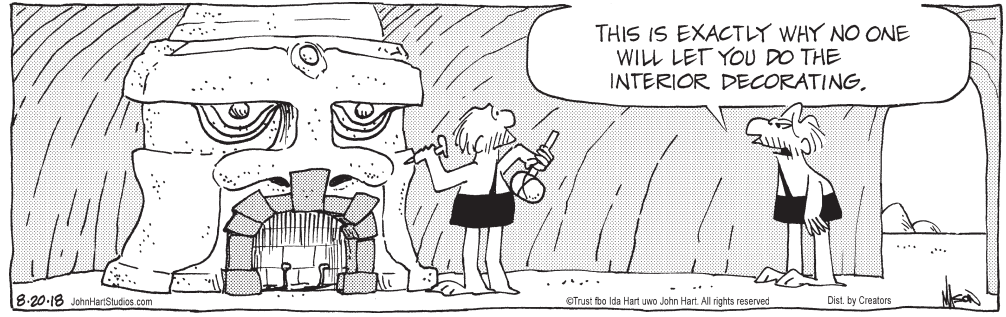
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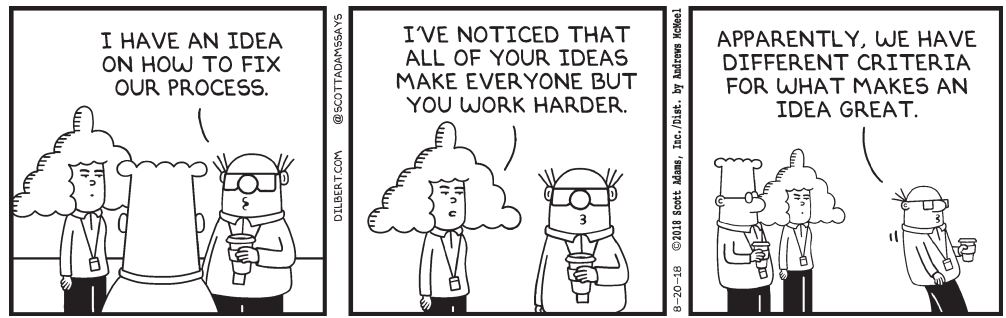
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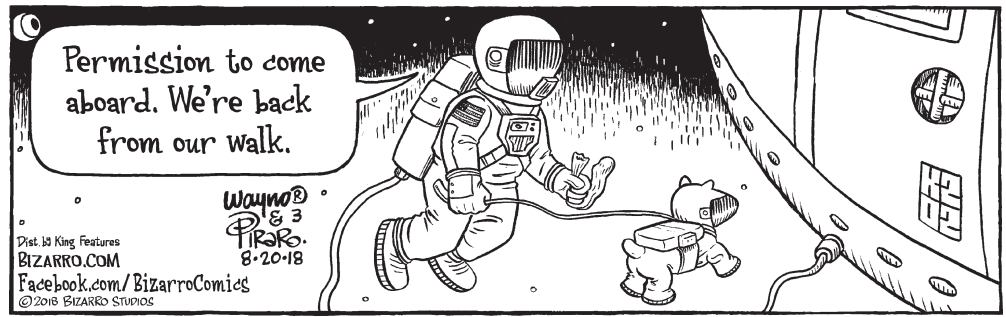
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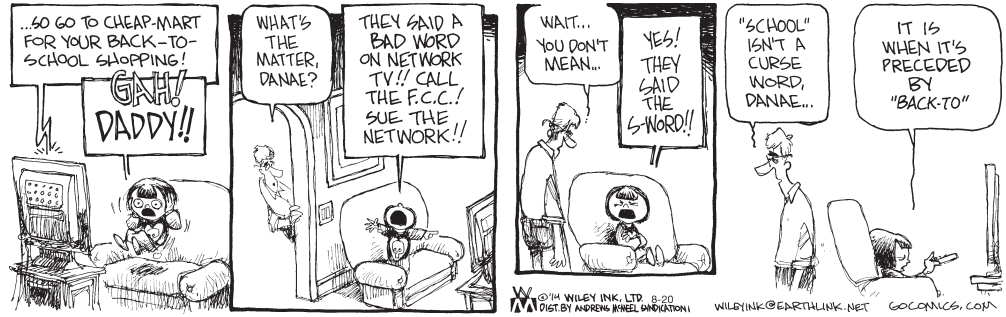
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