

Having trouble with purging

Dear Annie: Next month, I'm moving into an apartment that's smaller than my current one. So in the meantime, I've been going through all of my stuff, trying to purge anything I don't use. I have been donating a lot of clothes, books, DVDs, knickknacks and the like to Goodwill. I used to have trouble letting go of things because of sentimental attachment, but after a few moves, I've gotten pretty good at detaching feelings from objects.

The one place where I'm running into problems is when it comes to gifts. Anything a friend or family member has given me, I have a hard time throwing away. I feel guilty. I think about the person excitedly picking the thing out for me. For instance, my aunt always sends me jewelry, but I only wear it when I see her, a couple of times a year. I don't really wear much jewelry normally. And my mom and dad have gotten me countless T-shirts from their travels over the years. They're great T-shirts, but I must have over 30 T-shirts. My dresser drawers are overstuffed. But every time I put one of the

T-shirts in my "donation" bags, I end up digging it out a few hours later. How can I get over this, Annie? — *Can't Give Away Gifts*

Dear Annie: Perhaps a little thought exercise will help you to clear this mental hurdle. Think of a gift you gave years ago to a loved one — your aunt, let's say. Now think of that gift sitting on her closet shelf, gathering dust and giving her pangs of guilt every time she sees it. Would you want her to keep it just because you gave it to her? Of course not. You'd want her to donate it and make space for things she loves. And she'd probably want you to do the same. You might also let her know you have plenty of jewelry now, to save her from spending money on it in the future. As for the T-shirts from your parents, you could repurpose them into a quilt or simply keep one or two of your favorites and donate the rest.

Remember that just because you don't love a gift doesn't mean you love the giver any less.



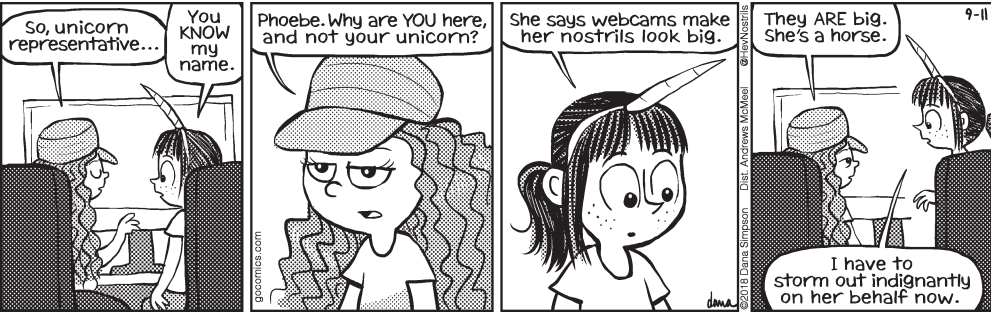
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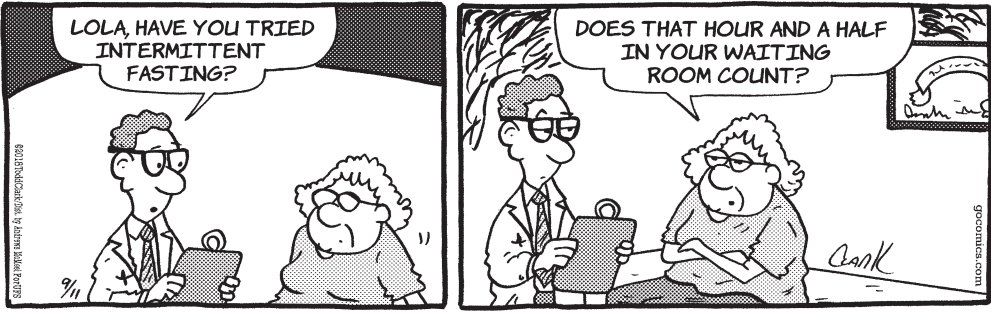
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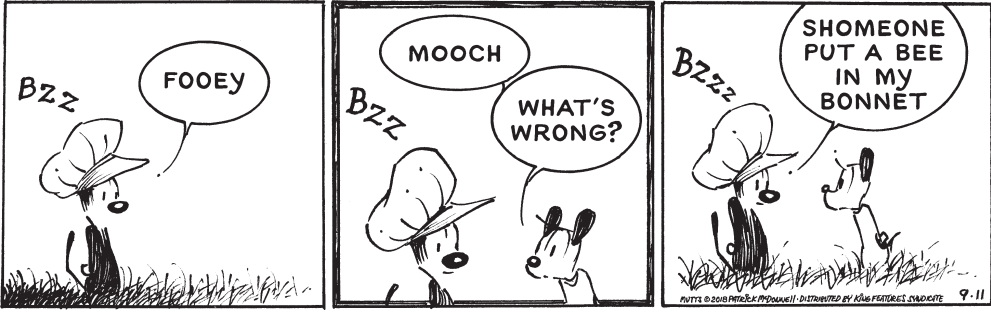
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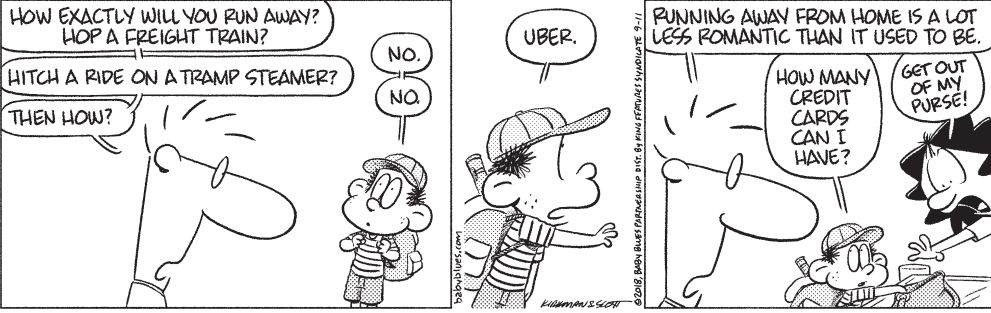
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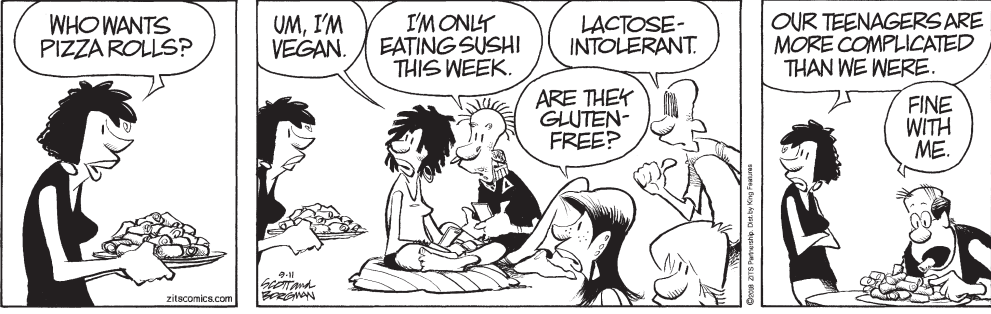
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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It might be strange to think of competition as a social skill, but its purpose is key to our social structures. Today's competitive interaction will help you decide how best to spend your time and who best to spend it with.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Talk can be cheap and it can be expensive, too. The value depends on who's buying it and what they are willing to give for it. Mostly, you'll pay in attention, which you're likely to give to those who talk less, not more.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It's as if you're standing on the intersection of life pushing the "walk" button, unsure if it will actually have an influence on the traffic pattern. The jury's out on that one, but you're better off pressing than doing nothing.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). If what the Dalai Lama said is true, and the aim of spiritual practice is to become a friend to all beings, then it makes no sense to spiritually evolve to dislike someone or a group, and there is no such thing as righteous hatred.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You may find that you keep asking the same question to which you already have the answer. That's because you don't like the answer. Either prove it wrong, or accept it so you can move on to better questions.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll do the noble thing, which is to say you'll protect those who are vulnerable and help those who are difficult. Ignore negative attitudes and try to connect with the goodness in others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You've just about forgotten that someone wronged you, probably because you've trained your focus on the many

things they did right by you. This is how you'll continue to bring out the best in others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Even if it's not technically going so smoothly this morning, a simple nod to the universe will set your day off on the right note. Nothing fancy. "Thanks for everything" will do.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). To some degree, moods are choices. They certainly don't feel like it. But there's something controllable in them if you're able to take a mental step back and witness your own emotional landscape.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Allow for mutuality. Don't let pride get in the way. If you give too much and don't let anyone give back, people will be robbed of the pleasure of completing the circle of reciprocity.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). One way to clear your mind is to talk it out. But to whom should you talk? Everyone has a bias. Those who love you are the most biased. Perhaps a stranger or a professional will provide the best insight.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). As long as people can change, the world can change. Be the agitator. Someone has to. Without those irritating grains of sand, the world would be bereft of pearls.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 12). You are learning to feel comfortable wherever you are and to love yourself no matter what. This eliminates the fear of missing out and the need to grasp at things that will prove your worth. You'll enjoy an easier time in relationships. People trust you and give freely to you. A single big project will stretch the year. Libra and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 2, 5, 11, 15 and 20.

BLONDIE



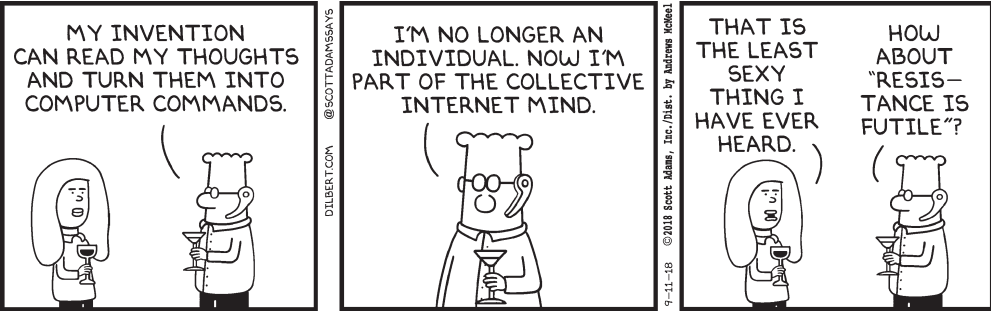
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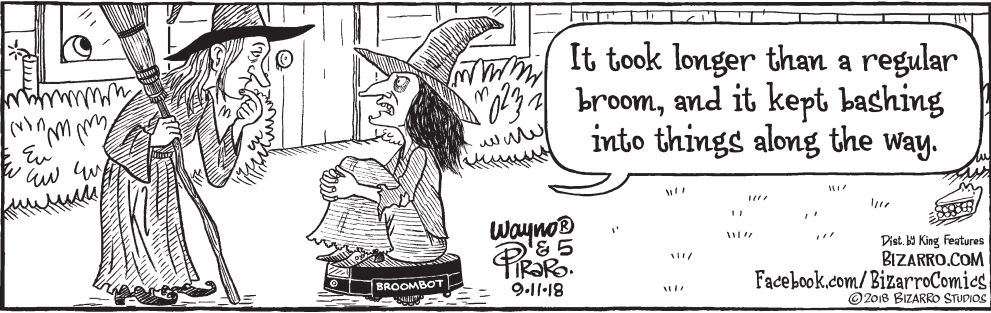
B.C.



DILBERT



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WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

