

Husband's past is embarrassing

Dear Annie: My husband and I are alcoholics in recovery with multiple years of sobriety. We are in our 60s. When my husband was 17, he committed an act of violence that resulted in imprisonment. This act was in retaliation to someone who snitched on him for drug dealing.

My husband regularly talks about this part of his life in AA meetings. I am very embarrassed by this. I've talked to him about how this makes me feel, but he says it's part of his story. I can understand that in some situations, his disclosure of his past would help people, such as men who are currently incarcerated. In conversations between the two of us, my husband will refer to his prison life with what seems like fond remembrance. This bothers me very much.

Am I being selfish and controlling in wanting him to stop talking about his prison life? I know that I cannot control him, but I wish he could just talk about his recovery. I'm thinking about going to different meetings so I won't have to listen to him. Is that the best thing to do? —

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Another Annie

Dear Another Annie: I think that going to different meetings would be wise. It would allow each of you space to focus totally on your own recovery, without filtering it through the lens of your marriage. You might also benefit from attending Al-Anon meetings, in addition to Alcoholics Anonymous, to help sort through some additional baggage you may not even be aware of you've been carrying. (I've heard good things about SMART Recovery and LifeRing, which also offer support for the loved ones of people with alcoholism.) Congratulations on your years of sobriety.

Dear Annie: The advice you gave to "Faithful in New Mexico," the poor soul who has been in and out of the hospital and is now home recovering, was far off base. Her husband was ascended upon by two women wanting to "console" him during his wife's health crisis. You said she should take solace in the fact that her husband was honest with her and he was furious that these women

were so forward.

First off, he told his wife that she did not know these women. How does he know them? Why would he be pouring his heart out to other women about his wife, her health issues and the decline of their family home situation? Because he's guilty! The reason he confessed to his wife was to make himself feel better. He either did act, wanted to or will. If it meant nothing, why tell her? He should have kept his mouth shut or told his wife who these women are. The fact that he is talking to these women about himself and his wife is a sure sign of guilt. Maybe it has not gone further, but it will in time.

I'm very independent. I was married at 37, had cancer at 48, had surgery and did treatments. My husband was "consoled." How far he took it, I have no idea. He never breathed a word. I heard from another source. — D.P.

Dear D.P.: I'm so sorry that happened to you. You're right that sometimes when partners bring up such things, it's out of guilt. I hope that wasn't the case for "Faithful in New Mexico" and her husband, but I'm printing your letter because it's an astute point.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). In school, we study for the tests to get the grade. Real-life relationships aren't forged in tests. We make the grade through routine pleasant interactions.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Games, awards or some kind of competition is featured. If you win, be gracious and brief. If you lose, the same applies. Either way, you're likely to win a friend, acquaintance or at the very least, a new contact.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Most people will go wide; you should go deep. Do the best you can do at the thing you do the best and you'll be sprinting past the rest, making a name for yourself, carving out your unique niche.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll be making things and presenting things. Perfection isn't the point. Take a step back. What matters about this? What will people's take away likely be? Speak to that. Any attempts at perfection are misguided.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It's not about going slow, it's about creating a sustainable rhythm you can carry out time and time again, a steady march that will get you across the regions to where you want to be.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). It's not always as easy as it seems to figure out what you really want and need because it's different for every person. To see yourself and your needs more accurately is the start to attracting more desirable circumstances.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You have charisma to spare. The challenge is in directing it well and handling the attention that comes with it. Which is the most appealing choice.

Which is the kindest?
SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). What you're making isn't for everyone, so don't concern yourself with what everyone thinks about it. Cater your efforts specifically to the people for whom they will matter.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The way to happiness will be very simple. Find what matters to you and get deeper into it. Learn it well, do it often, take your understanding and appreciation of it to the highest level you can.
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Love doesn't always feel like love because it takes on so many forms. Some of the forms, for instance, the more truthful ones, can sting a little but you'll still find them very worthwhile.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Informal gatherings will be part of the fun. The conversation will be interesting, the food delicious. Plus, it will be satisfying to know that you can charm people just by being you.

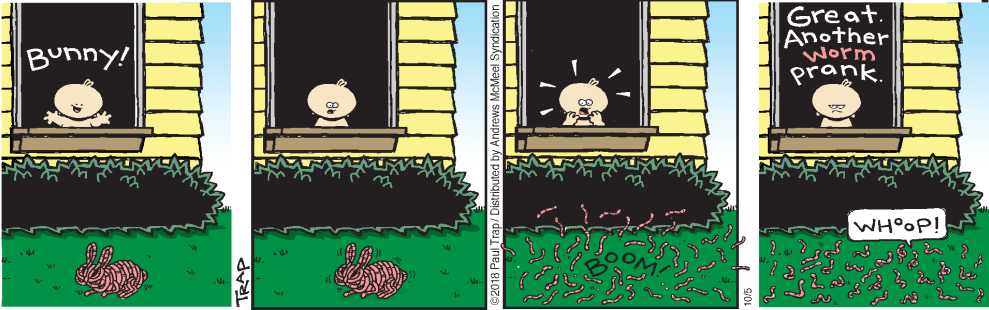
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Let someone take care of you. You don't have to be needy to do this, of course. People take care of one another in many different ways. Accepting a little help or tenderness is as good for the relationship as giving it is.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Oct. 6). You will claim a fulfilling sense of community in the months to come, involving yourself in scenes that fit nicely with your world view, interests and with what you have to contribute. Other highlights include a renovation of your domestic digs, a project that gets funded and being a major part of a loved one's advancement. Leo and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 33, 31, 2 and 17.

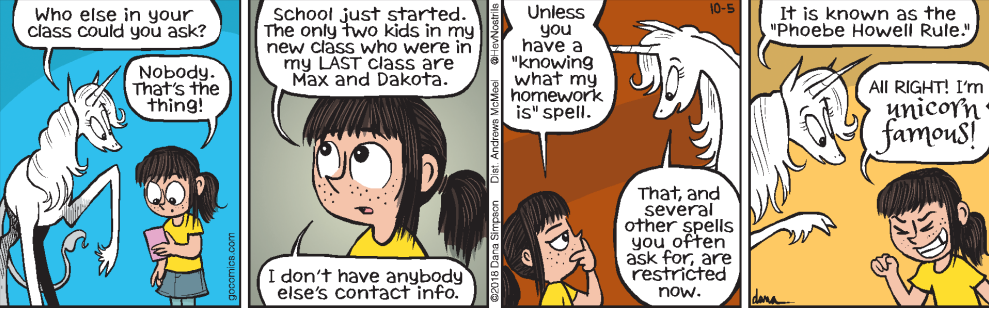
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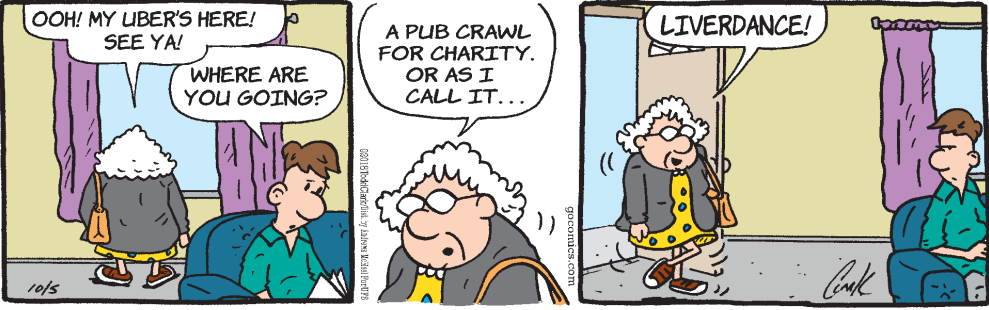
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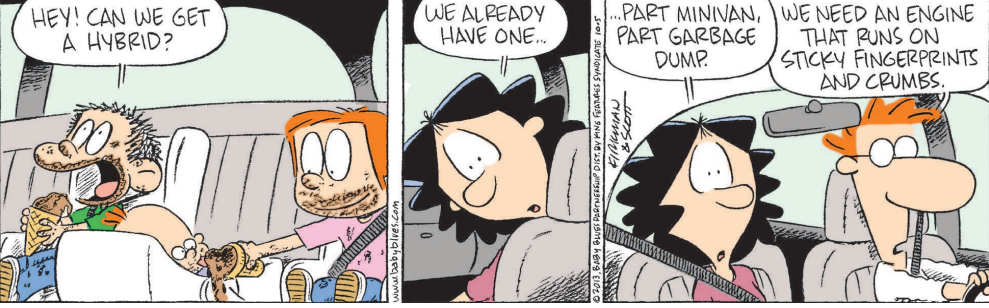
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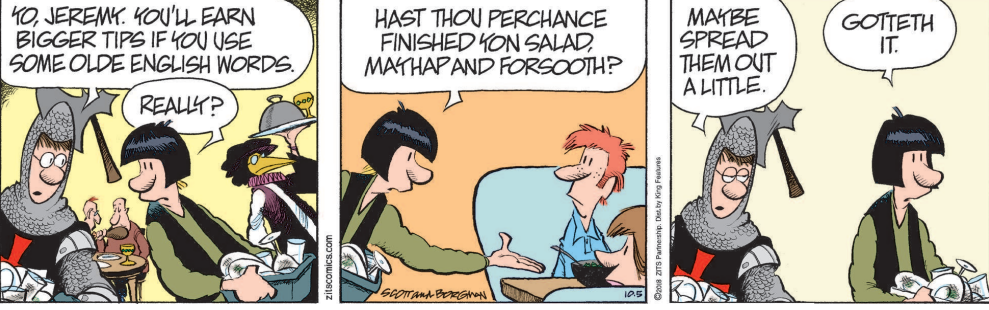
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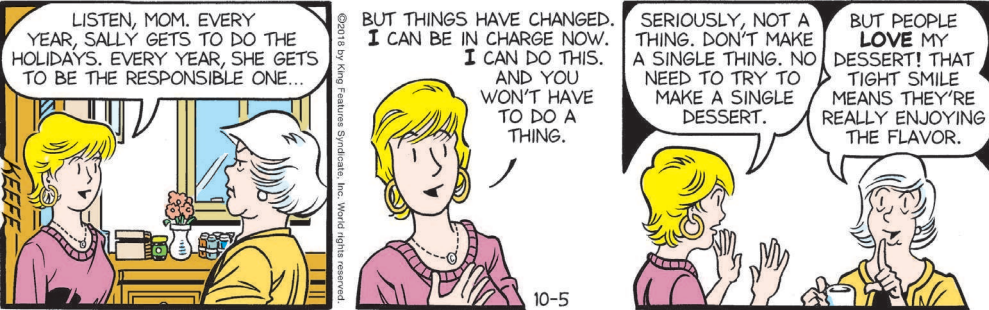
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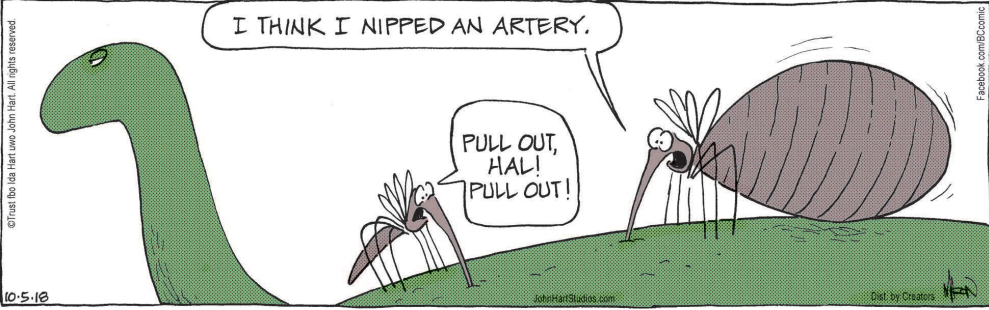
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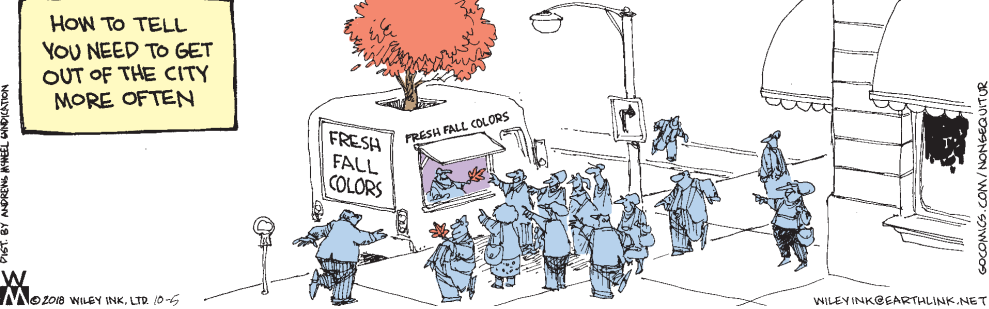
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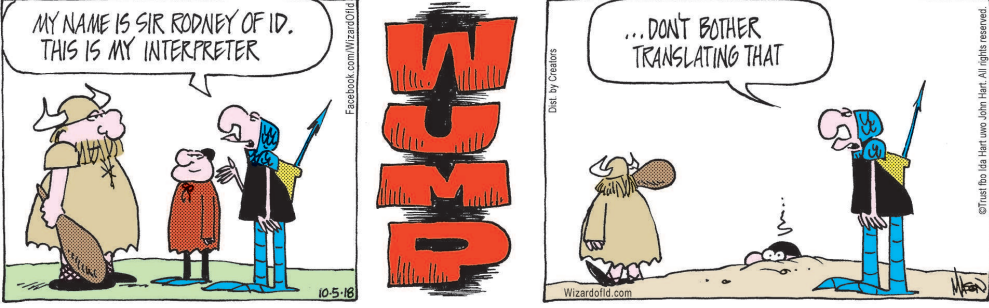
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