

Parents who are grateful

Dear Readers: Several weeks ago, someone requested that I pose a question to my readers that Ann Landers asked in 1975: “If you had to do it all over again, would you have kids?” I received an overwhelming response to this unscientific poll. The largest group of respondents (77 percent) consisted of parents who would gladly have children if they had to do it all over again. The second-most common respondents were people who didn’t have kids and didn’t regret it (12 percent). Next, at 9 percent, were parents who said that no, if they had to do it all over again, they would not have children. And lastly, 2 percent of people who responded didn’t have children but wish they had. One of my takeaways: By and large, most people are happy with their decision about whether to have children. It seems that, as with so many things in life, it really all comes down to attitude. Those who embrace their paths and practice gratitude live full lives no matter what their lives are full of. Throughout this week, I’ll be sharing letters from people who responded to the survey, starting today with the first group — parents who would still be parents if they had to do it all over

again. Tomorrow we’ll hear from the next group.

Grandmama Janet: Although raising children wasn’t always easy, the joy they have brought into my life has been immeasurable, and my husband feels the same way. And now we have been blessed with two precious little grandchildren. It’s wonderful to be part of the circle of life.

Robin In Vermont: If we had it to do over again, would we have kids — SEVEN kids? Would we choose all the sleepless nights, the seemingly unending trips to pediatricians, dentists, optometrists? Would we pass on going to “grown-up” movies, plays and concerts with friends and instead attend Little League games and school plays? Yes. In a heartbeat. Our children have filled our lives with so much joy. One more advantage: Because my husband and I have had to work extra hard to carve out time together, we seem to treasure each other’s company even more. After 40 years of marriage, we still love dancing in the kitchen and stealing a kiss when we can (to the horror of grandchildren who catch us in the act — just like their parents before them).

Connecticut Mom: A resounding

yes! The best thing I ever did. They’re both in college now, and I still wish I had more time with them. One of the greatest blessings in my life is that my kids have always gotten along. I have friends whose kids can barely be in a room together without bickering and others whose kids have no ambition or direction. Their answers might be different. But me? Oh, yes, I’d do it all over again. (I might not get married, but that’s another story!)

Ditto: Yes, I would have my kids, but I would not marry my husband again, so I’m not sure where that leaves me.

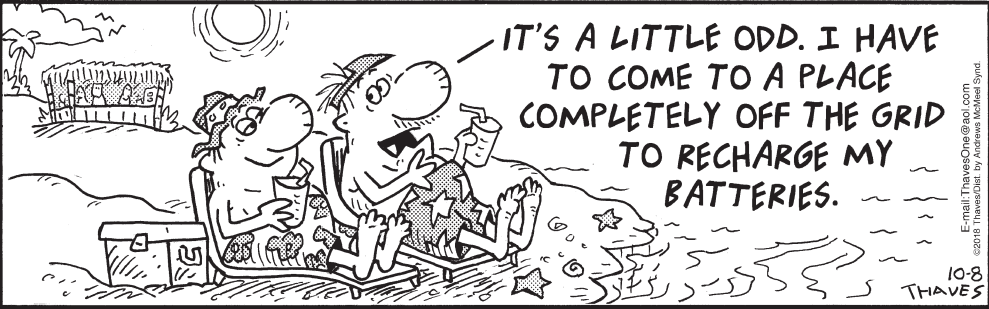
M.Y.: Absolutely! But I would try to worry less about perfection and enjoy the little things. And I would definitely place more emphasis on their parents. We were a team in raising them, but we got lost in the shuffle.

Forever Grateful: My parents were emotionally absent, and I wasn’t sure I had what it took to be a good, supportive parent. But I lived in Israel, where not having children is almost unheard of, so we had two — a boy and a girl. I am forever thankful for the opportunity to watch them grow and become wonderful adults. I know it is not for everyone, but sometimes jumping in and learning to swim can prove exhilarating.



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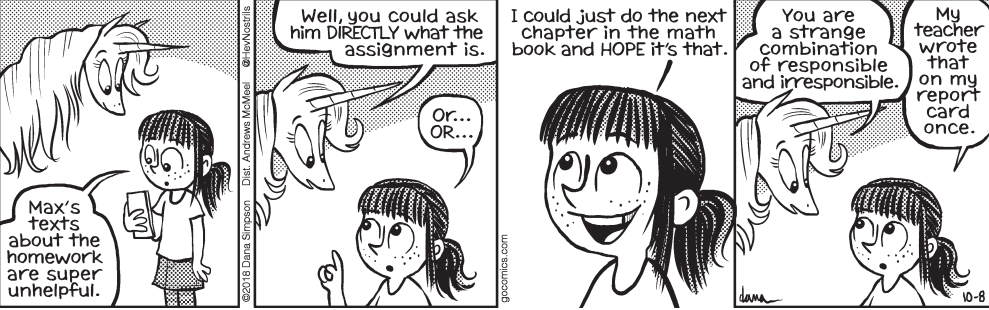
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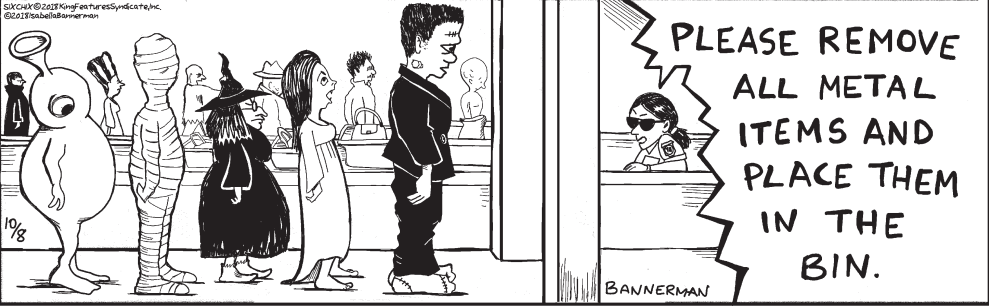
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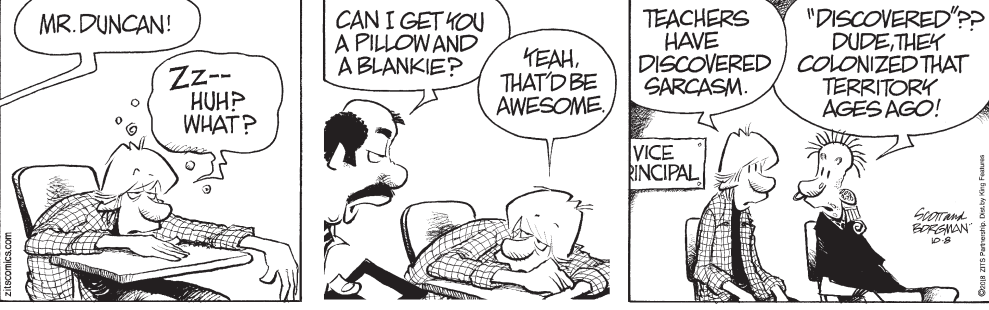
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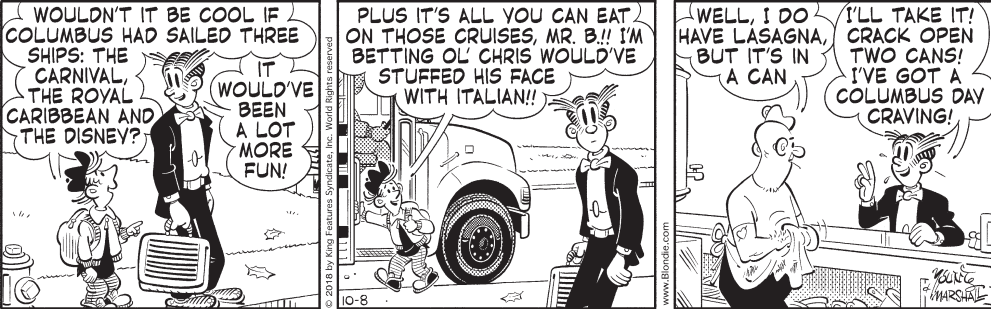
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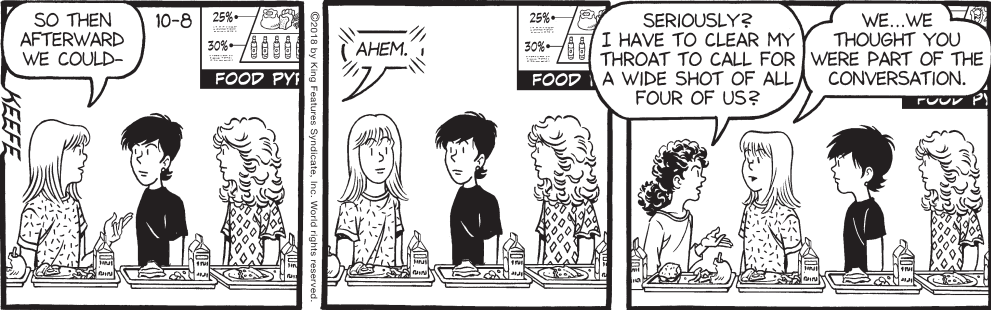
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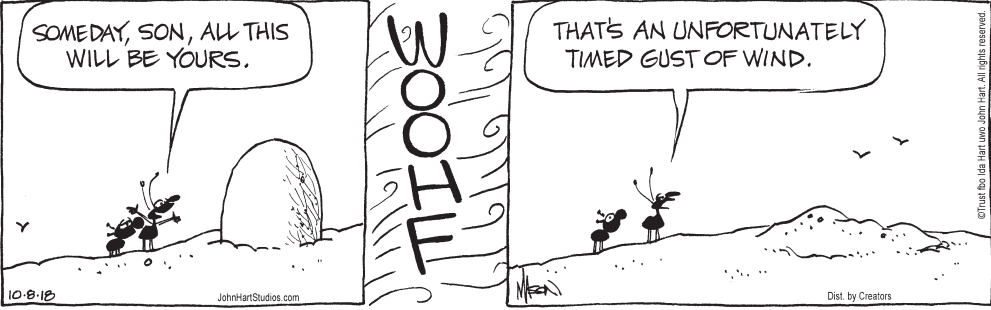
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