

The big coffee addiction

Dear Annie: Just recently, I started drinking coffee most mornings. I'd say that over the past four months, I've had coffee an average of four days a week. In the past month or so, I've noticed that I get headaches when I skip coffee for a day. I'm guessing these headaches are a result of my body's missing the caffeine it's used to getting. (This is really unfortunate, because I love the taste of coffee. But I guess I could always drink decaf.) Since I noticed these headaches, I've started weaning myself off of coffee, but I need something else to get me alert (and keep me that way) throughout the workday. What healthy substitute(s) could I turn to as I work to kick my coffee habit? — *Clinging to Caffeine*

DEAR ANNIE



ANNIE LANE
Creators
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kickstart your metabolism and, of course, rehydrate you. Dehydration causes fatigue. (And incidentally, coffee causes dehydration — so in the long run, drinking too much coffee will slow you down more than speed you up.) If you're craving something other than water — something with a more distinctive taste — try naturally caffeine-free herbal teas, such as ginger tea.

So the good news is you're over the hump. Symptoms of withdrawal from caffeine dependency typically are at their worst in the first two days after stopping consumption and will fade within nine days.

Dear Annie: I have to respond to the letter from "Stingy Dad and Proud of It," about his battles with his ex-wife over finances and issues with the children. I agree that he should do what is in the best interests of his children, and it sounds as if he has been making an effort

to do just that all along. Love is not displayed through monetary means. A bat mitzvah for a 13-year-old that costs five figures? Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I cannot imagine spending that kind of money on a party. Making this milestone special does not equal \$10,000-plus.

If I were this dad, I would explain this to my ex and give my daughter my time instead of my money. The daughter may be difficult to get through to right now, but "Stingy Dad and Proud of It" owes it to her and to himself to use his energy to improve his relationship with her. When all is said and done, she won't remember the amount of money spent on her when she was 13. She'll remember who fought for her, took the time to knock down her walls and loved her unconditionally. She will also remember who roped her into her parents' messy financial issues and who took the high road. — *Anti-Material Girl*

Dear Anti-Material Girl: You are very wise, and your advice is spot on. Thank you for writing.

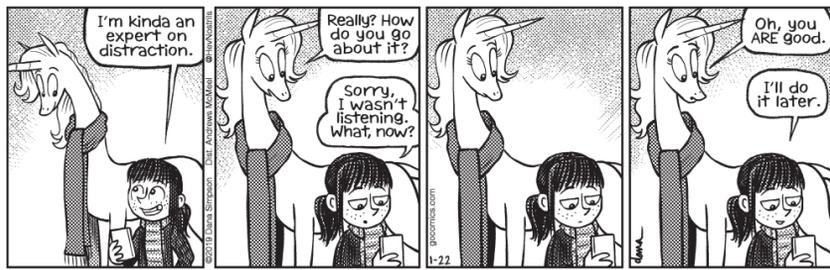
FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



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). This plan you had is working, mostly because you steered it well, without imposing total control. Because you don't have to be in control of absolutely everything for things to go right.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). A dream isn't a dream unless it's a little off. Bigger than life. Smaller. Stranger. You'll head into the day reasonably enough, but it's when you introduce the dreamy element that things start to get really interesting.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You tell yourself to do something, and then you do the opposite. Why? The complexities of will are confounding! But you can be certain there's a rebel child in you who doesn't trust authority, even if that authority is you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The way to power is not taking more and more; that's the way to destruction. True power is knowing what you can influence and accepting what you can't.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There's no such thing as a mediocre goal. Is it beyond where you are now by an inch? Half an inch? A foot? It's progress. Count everything. It's the kind of day when you need every win you can get.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). How do you know if you're being arrogant? You don't. That's the disease of arrogance. You're checking yourself, so you're probably in the clear. People who are truly arrogant usually forget that step.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Remember when sleeping seemed like a luxury, money was scarce and you weren't sure where you were getting the extra energy to forge forward but you did it anyway? It was a test that made you strong. Appreciate it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You may think that someone has "arrived" but that is a perception based on a criteria of success that is subjective. The important thing is not to act weird when people achieve things and other people don't. Be cool.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The hard work is coming up next. But don't worry; you're ready. In fact, on some level, you've been looking forward to this. Bonus: You're about to find out which of your colleagues is the worthiest.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Good relationships are built on mutual trust. Right now, you're reaping the benefits of doing something as simple as showing up when you say you will and doing what's expected.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Even though you don't have a ledger telling you how much you owe and are owed, in some way you're keeping track. You're noticing an imbalance in the give and take department. Start thinking about how it might be rectified.

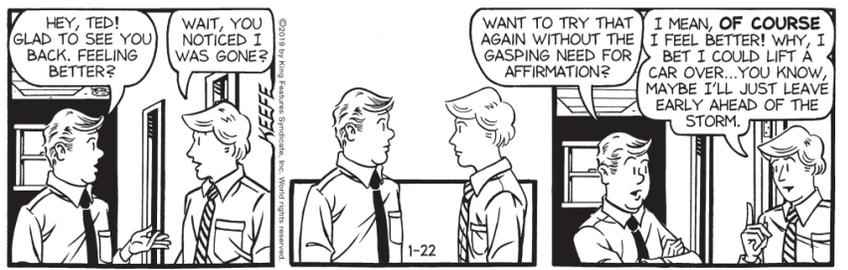
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll be dealt a wild-card. Think carefully about how you want to play it. Much depends on the others at the table. Make your best guess about their hand.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 23). It starts innocently enough. First you make someone's day, and then you get addicted to seeing that kind of smile. So you do more and more, making the world better and brighter. Interesting new hobbies and friends are part of the package. A carefully researched investment will make life a bit easier. Capricorn and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 3, 33, 21 and 40.

BLONDIE



SALLY FORTH



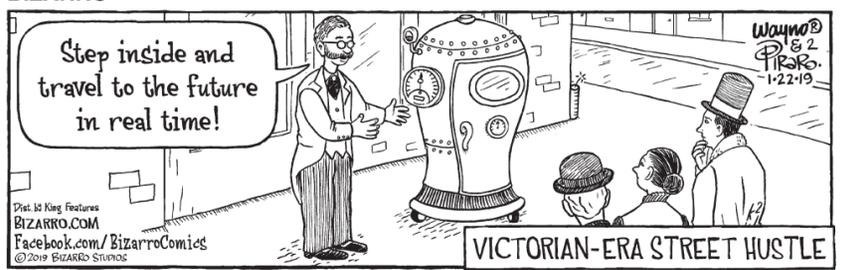
B.C.



DILBERT



BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

