

Feeling left out at work

Dear Annie: At my job, I'm the newbie on the team. The others I work with seem to know one another well, and they chat and make jokes in the office all the time. Meanwhile, some of my teammates are rather passive-aggressive with me. I don't understand why, though. I'm good at my job, and I always put in 110 percent effort. It seems to me that teammates who make more careless errors but are part of the "inside club" get far kinder treatment than I do. I'm a laid-back person and very open and honest, and I just want to be able to talk casually with these co-workers I feel have excluded me. I want to be a part of their fun conversations, but friendship can't be built instantaneously. How do I become more connected to these people and stop feeling so lonely in the office? It hurts to see them laugh with one another while I'm singled out. I've seen a co-worker curse in the

office while laughing with another co-worker and then turn to me and speak coldly; it's like a 180-degree switch. Ugh. — *The Odd One Out*

Dear Odd One Out: If they're intentionally excluding you, you're the better for it. Those aren't the sort of people you should worry about impressing. But I doubt they're acting out of deliberate malice. More likely, you're just the newbie, and it takes time to build rapport at the office. Familiarity with co-workers is earned through years of working together.

Continue being yourself and doing good work, and stop putting so much pressure on the idea of being friends with everyone. You may never end up being super warm and fuzzy with your colleagues, and that would be totally fine. Look at it this way: You'd be able to get more work done while others socialize and to go home and have a healthy

social life that's not tangled up in work.

Dear Annie: This is in response to "Mulling Over Memoir," who wishes to record her father's stories. I help people write their memoirs, and there are a few methods I've used that are helpful if the interviewee lives some distance away.

For my own dad, I emailed him a question a day, and he replied with his answer, which I copied and pasted into a growing document. When our online interview was complete, I had amassed an entire memoir with relatively little effort.

If email is not an option, another way to gather stories is telephonically, using a speakerphone and an audio recorder. That way, your hands are free to type what is said, and the recording device captures anything that may have been missed. — *Making Memoirs in Michigan*

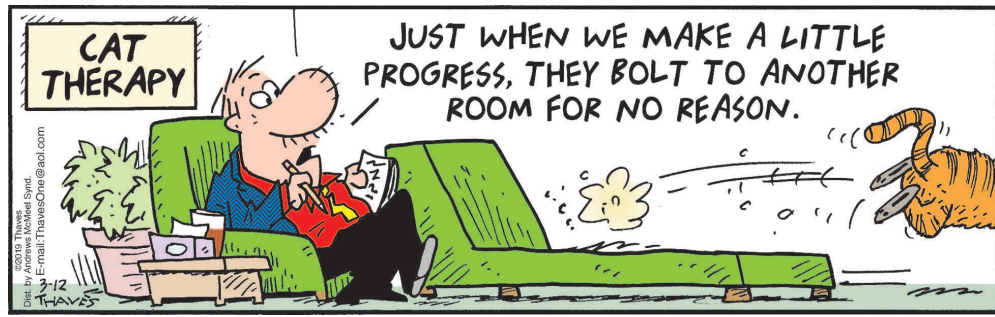
Dear Making Memoirs: These are incredibly useful and practical tips for helping loved ones tell their stories. Thank you for writing.

DEAR ANNIE

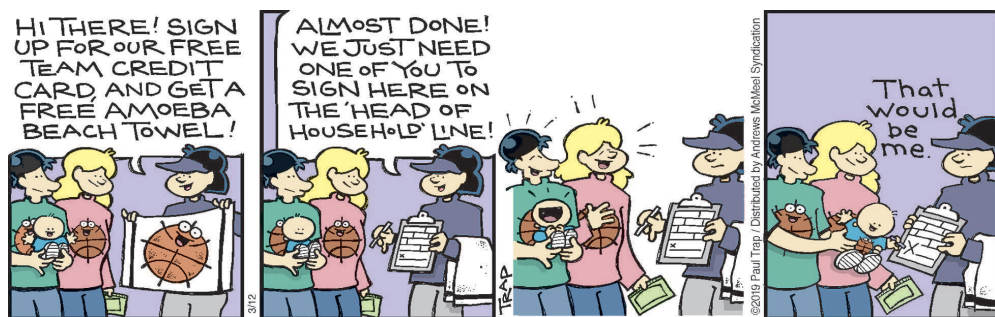


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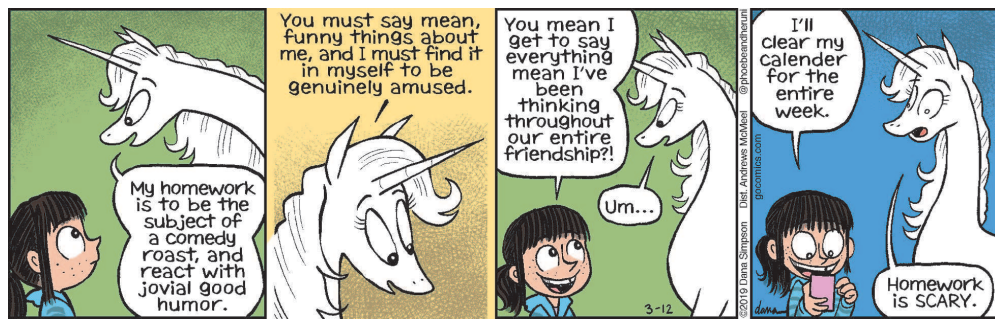
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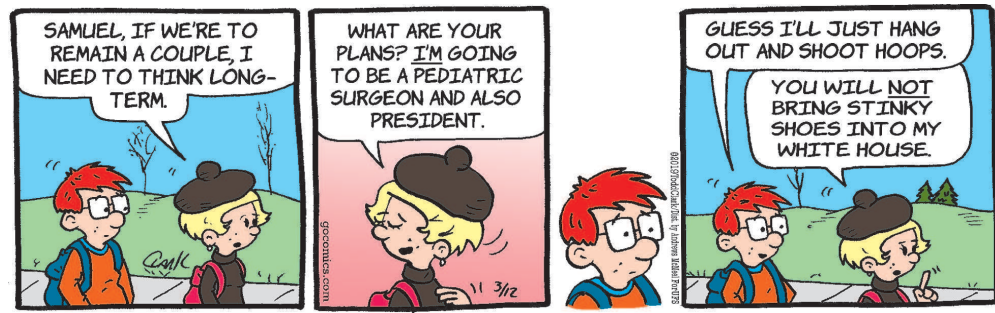
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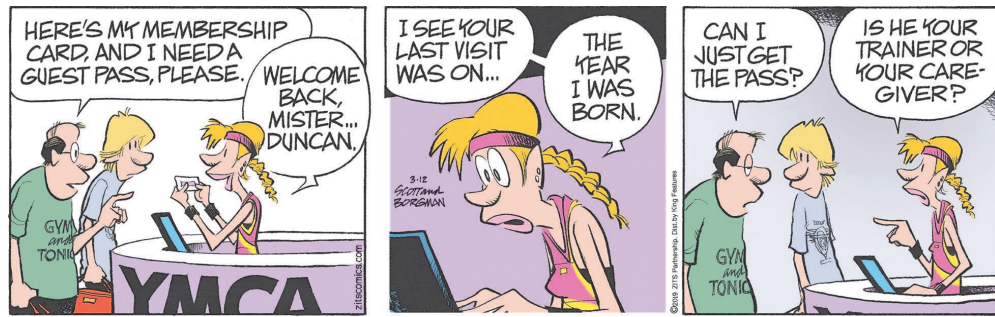
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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). As long as you do nothing to interrupt or counteract the natural rhythm and flow, it's one of those days when it really seems as though time is on your side.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Galileo was arrested for saying the earth orbits around the sun. Well, one era's dangerous words are another era's common knowledge. You're developing an opinion that's outside the commonly accepted one.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Time is relative, sure. But the order of things really matters to us. We are creatures of predication and expectation. So what happens first is significant. You'll be making a first impression today. Put some thought into it.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Today's power move: Go ahead and put everyone on a program of restricted information. When it comes to your business, you're better offering it up a need-to-know basis.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Just think of all you could do if you didn't have to be correct, appropriate or acceptable. Actually, it's difficult to even imagine because you've followed the rules for so long. But allow yourself the fantasy. There's wisdom in it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your spiritual creed isn't the same as theirs, but you won't really know this until you articulate what is yours. Write it down. I believe (fill in the blank) This exercise will illuminate your next move.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The world will seem to light up with tidbits that call out, "Hey, over here, this one is for you!" When you see the world as "for me" and "not for me" it gets rather simple. No need to judge, agonize, glorify or condemn, just take or leave.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Self-restraint will be necessary. Your appetite might be bigger than can be afforded by stomach or wallet. And you can blame this on the cosmic currents, if that's any consolation.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Don't you hate when you can't find the right words in the moment, but you think of them a day (or hour or decade) later? That's OK. The zinger you come up with today will make up for some of those times.

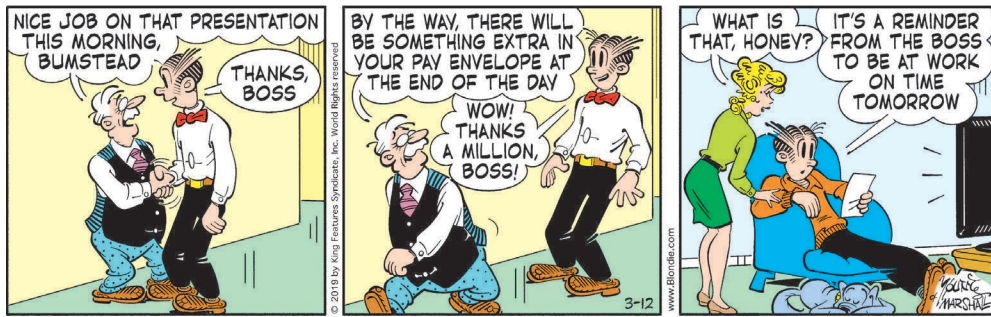
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When you just don't want to do a thing, it seems a lot more inconvenient and difficult than it really is. Actually, the task will take hardly any time or effort once you stop resisting it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll be more alive and alert in the morning, so use those early hours to make quick work of the stuff you really don't want to do. Otherwise the dreaded tasks will drag on and ruin your evening mood.

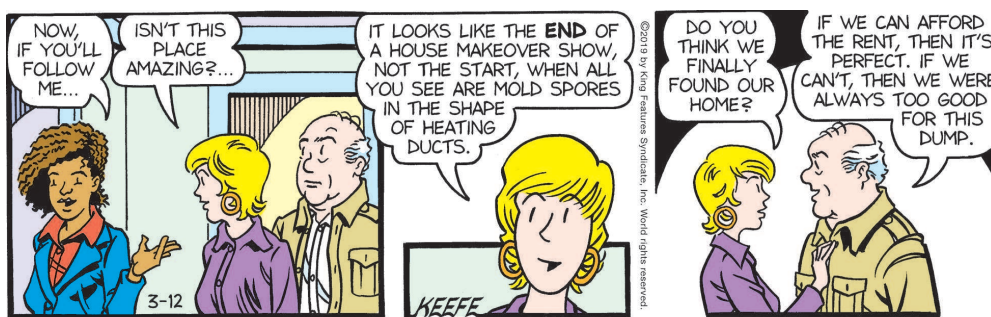
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Shopping is on the agenda. Bring a friend if you're afraid of being unduly persuaded by the sales team. Go alone if you're afraid of being unduly persuaded by a friend.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 13). You are so ready to do your part. What's even better is that you know exactly what it is! You're paid well and respected, but don't let it go to your head. In May, you'll be back in the starter position — a newbie in a completely different environment, thrilled to learn. Love and support will be all around you. Cancer and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 13, 3, 32 and 40.

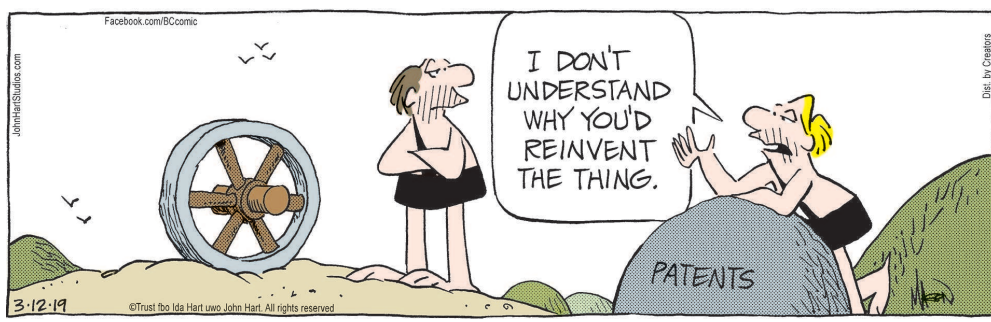
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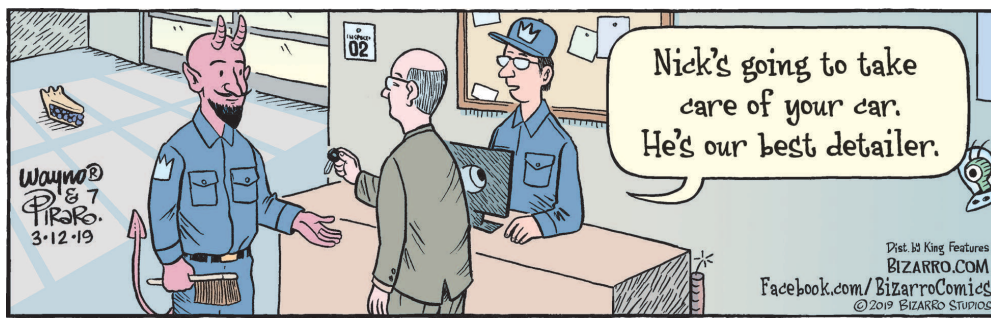
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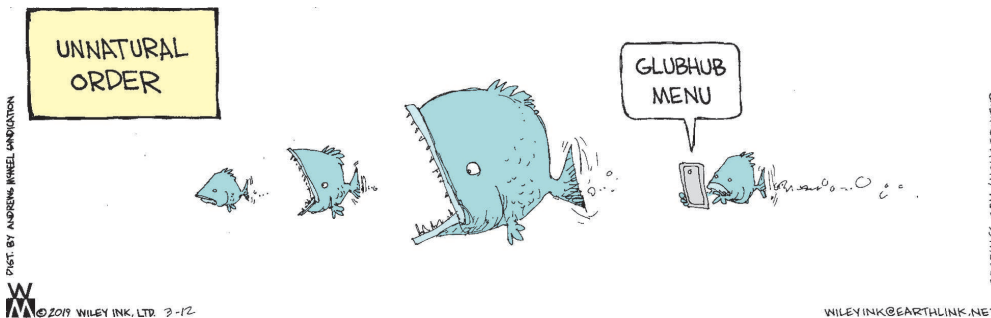
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