

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Doubt prevents man from enjoying life

Dear Abby: No matter what I do, I am never satisfied. I have a great wife and two great kids, and yet I always feel like I could have done better with my life. I go to work and no matter how hard I work, I feel like I never get recognition for it. When I go out with friends, we have a great time, but I never feel like I am really part of the group. I feel like the outcast who gets invited just so they won't feel bad.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

I don't know why I feel this way. I do suffer from depression and have spoken to a specialist. People often tell me that I spread myself too thin and never relax enough to enjoy my success. But how can I relax when I always feel unsatisfied with my efforts?
— *Just Not Satisfied*

Dear Not Satisfied: A way to do that would be to start by examining why you are so hard on yourself. Whether it was caused by parents who didn't give you the validation you needed while growing up or a lack of

self-esteem, until you understand why you are hurting yourself this way, your problem won't be resolved. You say you have spoken to "a specialist" about your depression. Perhaps it's time for another visit and a chat about what's really bothering you.

Dear Abby: Years ago when I was married, I bought a beautiful two-carat solitaire ring as a sign of my accomplishment at work. Now that I'm divorced, I continue to wear the ring on my wedding ring finger.

I love the ring, but my mother and friends say I am chasing away suitors who mistake it for an engagement ring. Do you agree with them? I don't want to wear this on any other finger and have no plans to give it up.
— *Stubborn in Pennsylvania*

Dear Stubborn: I agree with your mother and your friends that what you're doing sends a wrong message. When a woman wears a diamond on the third finger of her left hand in this culture, it means that she's not available. Nowhere have I ever heard that it signifies that she's successful at work.

However, I am puzzled about one thing: Can

you please explain, since you refuse to wear the ring on another finger or give it up, why you are asking me for advice?

Dear Abby: My husband talks out loud and carries on conversations with himself. Sometimes when I'm in another room, I hear him talking, and I think he must be on the phone or that someone is here.

One time he was outside and speaking so loudly I thought a neighbor had dropped by, so I asked him which one. He admitted he was only talking to himself. Is this a brain disorder? — *Curious in the East*

Dear Curious: I don't think it's a brain disorder, so quit worrying. When I do this — and I admit that I sometimes do — and my husband mentions it, I tell him I'm talking to the person who understands me the best. (If it was something to worry about, I would probably have been certified long ago.)

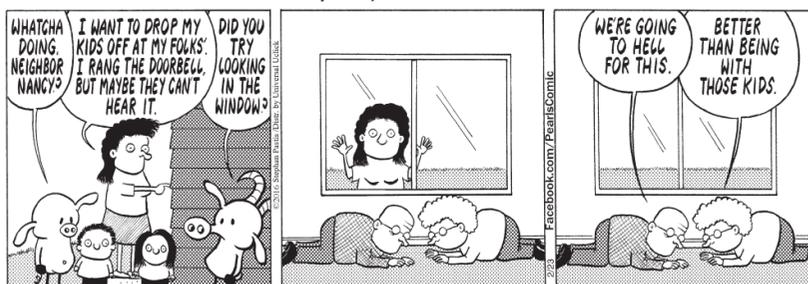
P.S. If this bothers you, ask him to speak more softly.

Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

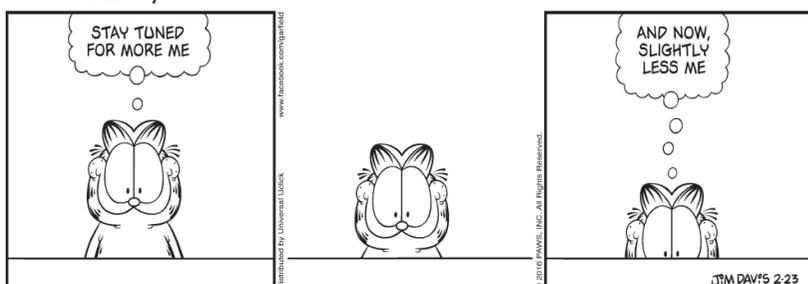
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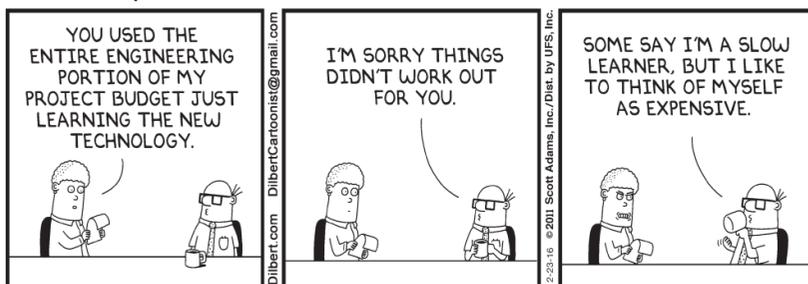
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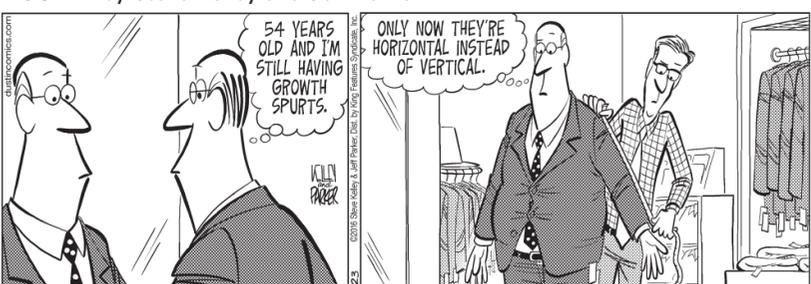
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Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The saying goes that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Put your energy into making sure that the people around you feel comfortable and cared for.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You appreciate that others know and have experienced things that you haven't. That's why you listen much more than you talk today. When you soak in a story, you are adding to who you are.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). With your curious mind you could find something exciting in just about any industry or interest, and yet the one you're in is the hardest to get enthusiastic about today. That's why it's lucky to invite an outsider to your realm.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). New relationships are fragile. Every small move of the dance establishes a precedent. The young rush in, unaware, while it takes great courage for experienced people to connect — they know what's really at stake.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Victory has made you cautious. True, there's so much more to lose now, but don't let it stop you from acting as decisively as you know you should. Hesitate and you'll waste this precious momentum you've got going.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You didn't mean to eavesdrop, but you couldn't help but overhear anyway. Now you know something you're not sure

you want to know. Better to process this a while. Chances are, it's not yours to take action on.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You have rules for yourself, some of them consciously formulated, most of them unconsciously so. It can be painful when life contradicts your rules. To relieve the discomfort, either change the rule or change the life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The current way may be working very well, but don't let that stop you from seeing a distant future in which the variables are likely to change considerably. Fight myopia with a Sagittarius by your side.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There's a time to mind your own business and do your thing, but right now you need to pay attention to the competition so you can strategize. A thorough analysis is in order.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You don't have to move your head to understand the distractions to your right and left. You know exactly what's going on there. Your peripheral vision has become strong, lending power to your sixth sense.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Be careful not to lean into the thing you want, or you'll wind up paying more for it than you should. Hide your eagerness. Or, better yet, find a way to want it less so you're at an advantage in the negotiations.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Aiming at the best and highest may feel like overreaching, but this is not wishful thinking. You're essentially just being yourself. There's something in you that tells you that you can do this. Listen. It's right.



HOLIDAY MATHS