

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Wanting to hit the higher notes in the church choir, Vern turned to using helium.

Teen thinks respect must go both ways

Dear Abby: I am a 17-year-old girl and a senior in high school. My parents and I (more my mom and I) have struggled with the topic of "respect" for a long time.

She constantly says, "To earn respect, you must give it," and I agree 100 percent. The problem is, she doesn't believe that she and Dad should live by that — just me. She feels that no matter how upset I might get by something rude she or Dad says, I don't have the right to talk back.

What upsets me is they talk rude to me all the time! Do parents have the right to talk rude if they want and expect their kids to be perfect little angels? Please help. — *Needs Respect*

Dear Needs Respect: Parents should model the behavior they want from their children. Sometimes it's difficult not to react and say something impulsive (rude), but that doesn't mean that parents — and teenagers — shouldn't make every effort to be polite.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

A step in the right direction would be to say, "When you do that, it makes me feel..." Try it, and you may get a better reaction.

Dear Abby: My son is 8 and lost his dad a year ago. His dad was never very involved in his life, even though our son begged for his attention. His dad's sister, "Jillian," is a children's coach and very tough and hardcore. She has tried to have a relationship with my son, but he is pulling away from her.

When she asks to do something with him, he refuses. I have tried to prevent friction by telling her we already have plans. It finally came to a head when she accused me of trying to keep him from his dad's family. When I told her the truth, that her personality is too strong for my son, she replied that it's not a good enough reason.

Jillian is an alcoholic. She drinks no matter what time of day it is, so I'm OK with the idea that my son doesn't want to go anywhere with her. How do I handle this? — *Trying to Prevent Friction*

Dear Trying: When Jillian approaches you again, be as upfront with her about your own

reason for not wanting your son to be with her as you were about his. You are right to worry about his safety because he would be at risk if he rode with a person who "drinks no matter what time of day it is." And don't let anyone talk you out of it.

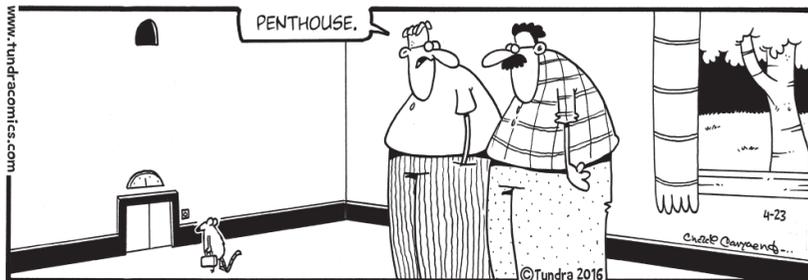
Dear Abby: My husband and I have a disagreement that has been ongoing for a few years now. Sometimes I need to make a quick run into a store while he's driving. When I ask him to drop me at the front door, he insists on parking first and making me walk the distance — whatever that may be. I say it is thoughtful and courteous to be dropped off as close as possible, and he should park afterward and I'll walk to wherever he is when I come out.

Please give me your take on this. — *40 Feet*

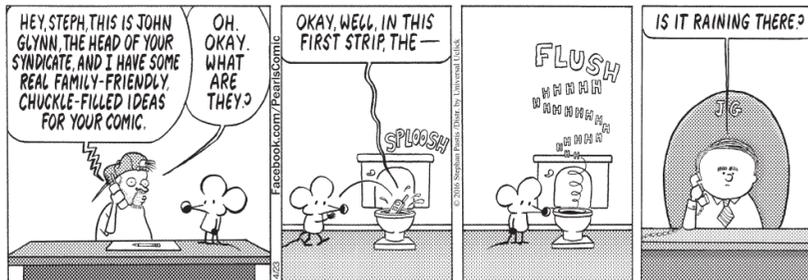
Dear F.F.: Your husband may actually have a good reason for doing it. If you are with him when he parks the car, you will automatically know where to find him when you come out of the store.

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

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PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



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WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



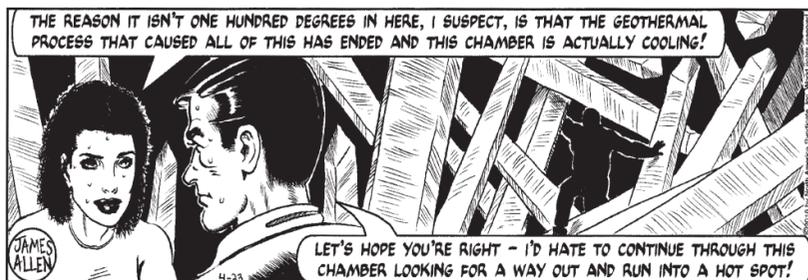
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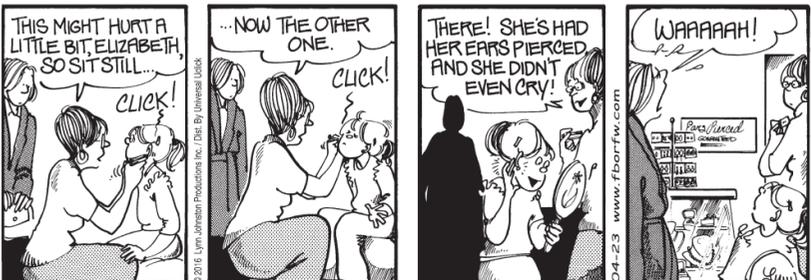
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Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Tinker around with the problem. Turn it and shake it and poke at it to see what it's made of. This one doesn't need such a delicate touch; rather, it needs to be called out, opened up and examined fully.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your tolerance of a person's behavior is exactly the thing that keeps the dynamic alive. If you don't want to tolerate it anymore, put your foot down and watch how quickly things turn around.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The one who knows more than you do on the subject will be mighty annoying indeed, especially if he or she seems to revel in this. It's something to keep in mind next time the positions are reversed.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Don't expect magic. Embrace a workmanlike aesthetic. Keep putting in the hours and cranking out the product. While you're extremely busy with this, magic just may align on you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Stories have the power to change the world, so of course they have the power to change your afternoon. Give some thought to the way you're going to tell people about your life, because it will matter now quite a lot more than you think.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). If only people could just be very honestly themselves around you, you could all relax. Unfortunately, some are

still afraid of your judgment. With more gentle encouragement you'll turn it around.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's not rocket science, just simple math. Play the game twice and you'll double your chances of winning. Keep playing it and you're bound to hit a jackpot sooner or later. The game in question now is love.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're like the seeker in the game. It's not your problem if the others haven't done their job. You agreed on a certain amount of time and now, here you come.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Once you get your backup plan in place, you may find that you love it even more than the frontline plan. Because you're so prepared for anything to happen you'll go forward with confidence that attracts only the best.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). This day will require more than the usual amount of pleasure and leisure. Instead of taking moments for relaxation, make relaxation your prevalent attitude. You'll actually be more productive this way.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). This thing about getting through it all by the skin of your teeth — is it getting old yet? If you had a better plan and more preparation you wouldn't have to be in constant reaction mode.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Friendship is about more than discovering the other person. It's about discovering yourself through the interactions. The closer you get to a lovely someone, the better you'll know yourself.



HOLIDAY MATHS