

FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



'Golf's pretty easy. You just hit the ball, then lean to the side and say 'FORE!''

BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



Love For Children Keeps Man In A Loveless Relationship

DEAR ABBY: I have been living with my girlfriend, "Robin," for four years. She has children from a previous marriage, and their father is fairly active in their lives. I jumped in and have taken the kids to activities, helped with homework and I pay the majority of the bills. I dearly love the children.

My problem is I no longer love their mother. Robin and I are like roommates who share a bed. There is no passion, no joy together and no partnership. I spend my time with the kids or alone. She's with them at different activities or busy on her computer. When I suggest ways we could bond together, she says, "I'm too tired," or "I don't want to do that," or "This is the way it is!"

I have stayed this long only for the kids, but I'm unhappy to the point of aching. I feel guilty about leaving and the strain it will put on the kids. Is there a way to leave a situation like this? Am I a bad man for wanting out and possibly leaving the children to a tougher life? — UNHAPPY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

DEAR UNHAPPY: Because the woman you're living with shows no interest in improving the quality of the relationship, wanting to leave does not make you a bad person. You will have to accept that because the children depend upon you for certain things they will be affected by your departure. It's too bad you didn't consider that before moving in with someone who had a family.

Try to make the breakup as civil as possible. Before you go, talk to each of the children individually. Make it clear that they are not the reason the relationship is ending and that you will always care about them. That way, they won't think they did something bad and blame themselves.

DEAR ABBY: My only daughter, "Claire," who is 25, has always had a strong work ethic. Her boyfriend "Charles" has never held

a job, either during college or in the year and a half he has been out of school. They were living with his parents until Claire accepted a one-year job overseas. Charles followed.

Claire's salary isn't great, so I know she has little money saved, but she wants to start planning her wedding when they return.

Should I stick with tradition and pay for it or listen to my head, which is telling me I don't want to see her marry Charles until he has held a full-time job for at least a year? I think she can do better, but I suppose she could also do worse. They do seem to love each other. — HESITANT MOTHER

DEAR MOTHER: Listen to your head. When Claire returns, let her know that she and her fiance will be paying for the wedding. It will be an introduction to the financial realities she and her husband will encounter after their marriage. Later on, when they're considering buying a home, you can give them the money that might have been spent on the wedding as part of their down payment — if they are still together.



DEAR ABBY

Jeanne Phillips

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DEAR ABBY: How do I break up with friends who I love but have nothing in common with anymore? I'm married with a child, but as a new business owner, I don't have time to meet their needs. How do you tell people in a loving way that you have appreciated their friendship in the past, but it's over? We have grown apart. — DON'T HAVE THE TIME

DEAR DON'T: Is it possible that your feelings are temporary, and that you are simply overwhelmed by the demands of your new business? If so, I'd hate to see you end friendships with people you love. Relationships don't always remain at the same level or have the same intensity. Rather than cut the people off entirely, explain that you can't be as available because you have a new business and don't have the time. It would be kinder.

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MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bigar's Stars is based on the degree of your sun at birth. The sign name is simply a label astrologers put on a set of degrees for convenience. For best results, readers should refer to the dates following each sign.

A baby born today has a Sun in Cancer and a Moon in Sagittarius.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR FRIDAY, JULY 19, 2013:

This year you can make a difference because of your ability to run spontaneously in a new direction. You might not be sure of yourself, yet you'll land like a cat on its feet. Listen to your instincts with those at a distance. You will be like a sponge, as you'll absorb a lot of different information. If you are single, you could meet someone whom you put on a pedestal. You will have many choices, so choose your sweetie with care. If you are attached, this might be the year where the two of you will manifest a special dream you both share. SAGITTARIUS can be confusing.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

HHH You might be ready to take off at the drop of a hat. If an adventure can last the whole weekend, that's even better. Whether you hop on a plane or go for a long drive to visit a friend at a distance, it makes no difference. Excitement is heading your way! Tonight: Go with the flow.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★ Take your cue from others. Make it a point to go along with set plans, as long as they are not offensive to you. Relating to others naturally draws out more information and establishes more of a mutual interest. Think carefully before making a decision. Tonight: Catch up on news.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ You could be pushing a hard line with a boss, older person or dear friend. At this point, this person is unlikely to do anything other than re-establish his or her boundaries. You could be taken aback by a wild thought or action; think before you respond. Tonight: Defer to a loved one.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★ You might want to differentiate between what is real and necessary and what is superficial and can wait. Through prioritizing, you will cruise through your must-do list. You might want to consider organizing a little get-together over the weekend. Tonight: TGIF! Time to celebrate!

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★★ You might not be exactly sure as to which way to turn. Detach, and pretend that you are not a part of the scenario, but simply an on-

looker. You will see what direction might be the most appropriate choice for you. Take in the panoramic view. Tonight: Let the fun begin.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★ You might consider staying close to home, as you appear to be working through a domestic issue. It is far better to ask too many questions than not enough. An associate or loved one suddenly might reveal a new dimension. Tonight: Make sure the base of operations is your pad!

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ You'll decide that you must know what is happening between you and someone in your daily life. You might make comments just to see what the reaction is. You could hear a most unexpected answer, if you are not careful. This person reads you cold. Tonight: Out late.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ You could be wondering what your limits are. Some of you might be focused strictly on your finances, while others will be considering the emotional variables. At times, you can be quite stern, and you push people away as a result. Is that really what you want? Tonight: Treat time.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ You might be suffering from a low-level depression, but you'll refuse to let the world see these moments. In the spirit of the weekend, you could take on the role of cheerleader and help others have a good time. Reach out to a loved one at a distance. Tonight: Lead the celebration.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★ You might feel off-kilter right now. Take a few days off. When was the last time you did something nurturing for yourself? Honor a change of pace, but don't feel compelled to be part of it. Maintain your sense of humor. Tonight: The evening comes and goes.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★★ You love people honestly and openly. Still, you might be irked by a pushy relative. Try not to be harsh. Think very carefully before you speak; otherwise, you might be surprised at the words that could come flying out of your mouth. Tonight: Call a few friends to hang out.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★★ You could be the teacher's pet, but that means that you are carrying extra responsibility as well. You might want to honor a whim or a long-term desire. Make sure that you let others know when you will and will not be available. Tonight: In the limelight and having a ball.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

