

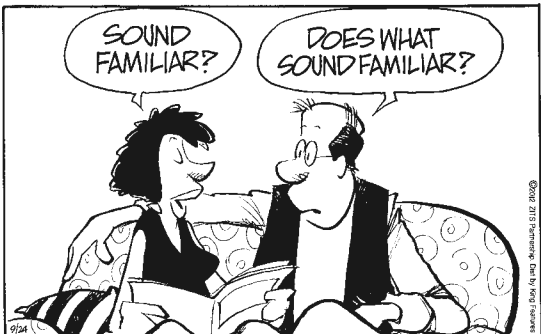
FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



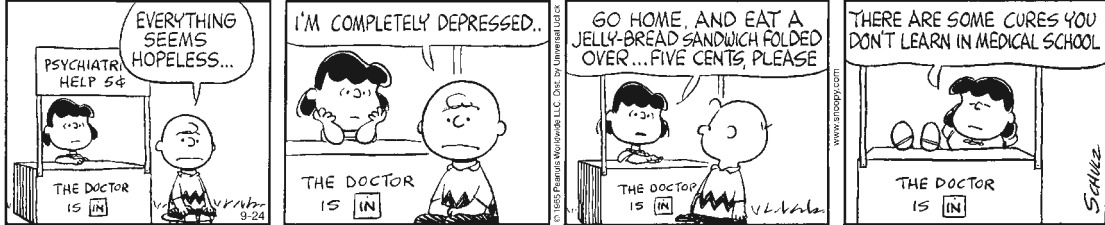
ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



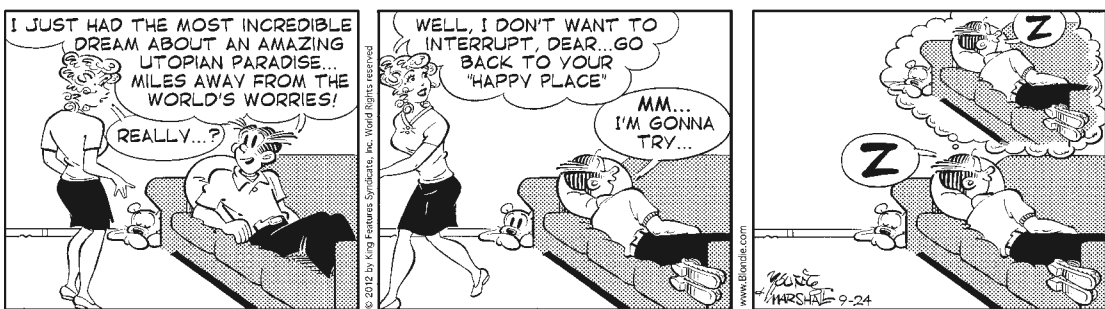
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



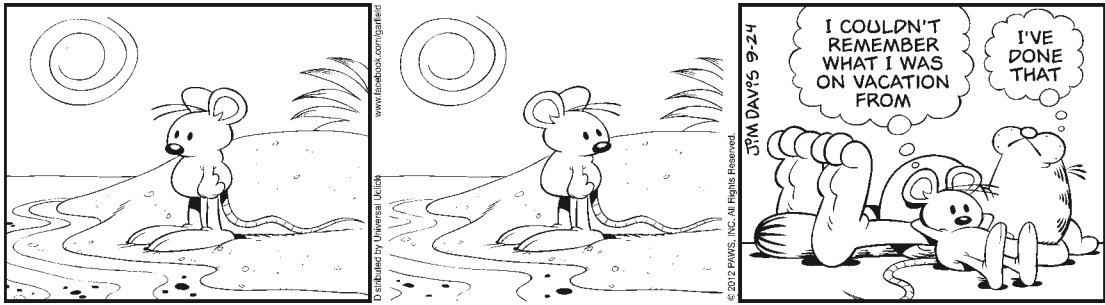
DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSONO



Mom Says Wife Is To Blame For Son's Filthy Apartment

DEAR ABBY: I am very concerned for my henpecked son who is expecting his first child. He works long hours (50-plus a week) at a low-paying job with an hour commute. His wife works part-time (10 hours a week). The problem is, their tiny apartment is a pigsty, and she doesn't clean or pick up. She expects him to do it all, and he tries to, while she reads and makes baby quilts.

How do I tactfully get her to do her share now, before the baby comes and she expects my son to "help her" even more? He is totally overburdened, stressed out, but seemingly happy. Until I saw the condition of their apartment I had suspected it was bad, but had no idea how bad the situation really was. — DESPAIRING MOM IN CONNECTICUT

DEAR DESPAIRING MOM: Not knowing your daughter-in-law, I can't judge whether she is lazy, or whether the reason she isn't doing more around the apartment is pregnancy-related. You say your son is happy. Be GRATEFUL for that. Rather than "tactfully getting her to do her share," why not volunteer to help them until your grandchild is on a regular sleep schedule? It would make you appear to be an angel instead of critical, and bring the three of you a lot closer than you appear to be. However, if your offer is refused, then accept that this is how your son and daughter-in-law prefer to live.

DEAR ABBY: I spent tonight in a parking lot, knowing I had no options. My husband of 25 years is an alcoholic and abusive. I have two teenage children at home. I'm in bad health and haven't worked in decades. I'm trapped. I have the typical arguments with my daughter. My son is a gem who stays home because he

doesn't want to leave us with his father. It's a sad situation.

While catching up on reading Dear Abby tonight, I saw a number for an abuse hotline where they will help me with a plan to leave. I have no money, no chance of getting a job. But that number gave me a glimmer of hope. It seems too good to be true, but I'll make that call. Thank you, Abby. — BEATEN DOWN IN TEXAS

DEAR BEATEN DOWN: I'm glad you are making that call to the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Part of the reason you feel so hopeless and "beaten down" is that for so many years your abuser chipped away at your self-esteem.

For any other reader who may have missed that column and needs the toll-free phone number, it is 800-799-7233.

DEAR ABBY: My good friend "Claire" has two daughters, 8 and 10. Her younger daughter is the same age as my daughter and they are very close. We spend a lot of time with them and have the girls at our house often.

After the last sleepover, my daughter commented that the sisters argue all the time and it's not fun having them over anymore. She would like to invite

only the younger daughter for a sleepover, but we have put off asking as we are afraid of hurting the older daughter's feelings by not including her. Actually, I'm afraid it might hurt the mother's feelings, too. What's the best way to invite only one sibling? — SLEEPOVER NIGHTMARE

DEAR S.N.: If the girls are arguing when they're at your house, you can bet it's happening at home, too. Talk to Claire and explain what happened and your daughter's reaction. The older girl should be interacting/socializing with friends of her own.

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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 Libra and a Moon in Capricorn if born before 4:32 p.m. (PDT). Afterward, the Moon will be in Aquarius.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR MONDAY, SEPT. 24, 2012:

This year tension builds with your professional and community activities. Do you have too much on your plate? You might want to cut back or delegate some of your responsibilities to others, even if you don't want to. If you are single, your playfulness cannot help but come out when interacting with others. A friendship is the key to your next relationship. If you are attached, the two of you feel strongly about your personal and domestic life. Just add more fun in! AQUARIUS knows how to draw you in. 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)

★★★★ When you hit an obstacle, you have no choice but to leap over it. You might try other approaches at first, only to discover that nothing else really works. Communication demonstrates how much support you have. Tonight: Where your friends are.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You will want to understand what is going on around you. The only way to find answers is to detach and become less invested in what goes down. You might have a difficult time staying neutral and open. Tonight: Nap, then decide.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Deal with a parent, partner or associate directly. You will see this conversation as a shortcut, as you will eliminate a problem. Your creativity might be off right now. Work with the ideas at hand. Later in the day, new solutions will come forward. Tonight: Try to think outside the box.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★★ Others seek you out. On some level, you might feel as if you are in the doldrums. Your fatigue might be a result of a mini-depression. A discussion with a dear friend or loved one opens many doors -- one of which will be an escape hatch. Tonight: Dinner with a favorite person.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ You have a lot to get done, and you will do just that if you can just focus. Do not approach others negatively. Your dynamic personality sometimes needs

taming, and right now could be a prime example. You do not need to feel pushed or pressed. Your effectiveness will amplify with a little less impulsiveness. Tonight: Take the most sociable invitation.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Stay even when dealing with someone in your day-to-day life. Several people could be bouncing off the walls. Your creativity allows you more options than many people could provide you. You might want to bring in a dear friend who has a unique slant on creating plans. Tonight: Relax; put your feet up.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★★ Your mind keeps drifting toward a family matter, domestic issue or a property or real-estate investment. You have been trying to avoid this thought, but it would be better to deal with it now. You'll feel more in tune with yourself and others as a result. Tonight: Kick up your heels as soon as you can.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ Keep communication flowing, and understand that some topics are too taboo. If a barrier emerges, you could have more problems with opening up a situation. Help others feel more comfortable, and you will gain as well. Tonight: Try to make it early.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ Be aware of upcoming expenditures. You could have difficulty with a certain situation or friendship that seems to hold you back. Sometimes, you need to let go and take a leap of faith. Try it! Tonight: Catch up on someone's news.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ You might feel as though you are totally in the moment, and also that someone is testing your authority. A male or assertive friend pushes you in a new direction. If you can absorb this person's ideas, you'll come up with an even better one. Tonight: Others seek you out.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★ Much is going on behind the scenes that you choose not to share, yet a lack of communication could make you feel uncomfortable. You might need to break the ice. Someone might be too much into his or her position or being right. Tonight: Take a relaxing stroll.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

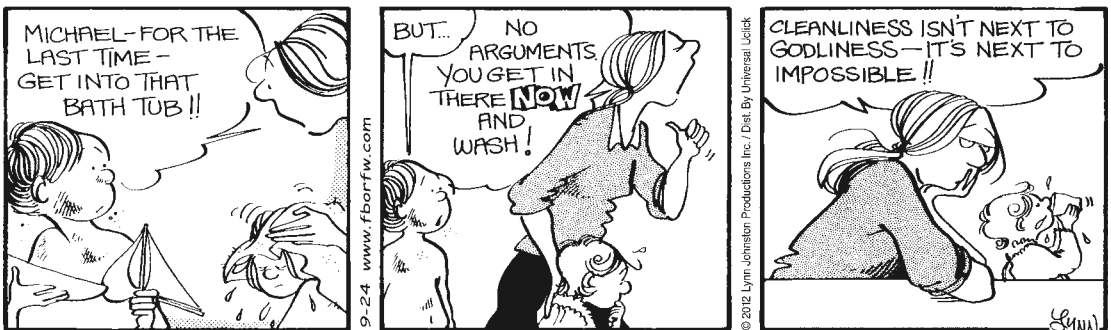
★★★★ Zero in on what is important to you. Understand that someone you care about could hold information back or even refuse to converse at all. Seek out a different source or someone who could enlighten you with even more insight. Tonight: Don't push. It is only Monday.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

