Mom is slow to address girl's excessive weight

DEAR ABBY

DEAR ABBY: I'm 12 and weigh 204 pounds. I feel really fat and I want to go on a diet, but my mom won't let me. I'm getting bad grades in gym class and need your help. — **SAD GIRL IN NEW HAMPSHIRE**

DEAR SAD GIRL: By recognizing that you have a problem that you can't deal with on your own, you have already taken an important first step in resolving it. The next is to talk to your gym teacher about this and enlist her aid in convincing your mother to give you the help you need.

Childhood obesity is rampant in this country, and all those extra pounds could negatively affect your health -- not only now, but in the future. If you have a pediatrician, the doctor may be able to discuss the importance of a healthy diet and exercise program for you with your mom. You will need the help of other adults to make her understand if she can't see that you need help now.

DEAR ABBY: I am 18 and dating someone of a different race. We have been together for more than a year. The problem is my father is very racist. Every time I sneak out to go see my boyfriend, my father wants to know who I am with. I tell him it's "my friends," but he knows I'm lying.

I want to tell him who I'm dating, but I know he's going to be judgmental and rude if I introduce him to my boyfriend. Any advice on what to do? — **NERVOUS IN THE NORTHEAST**

DEAR NERVOUS: At 18 you are too old to be sneaking around. Your father knows something is up, and he probably suspects the reason you're not being truthful or open, so stop lying. If he wants to know why you haven't brought the young man around, tell him it's because you know how he would react. And IF you decide to make introductions, be sure your boyfriend knows in advance what the reaction will probably be – if he agrees to meet your dad, that is. But I wouldn't blame him if he didn't.

DEAR ABBY: I ran into an old high school friend a while ago. "Jan" and I are both single moms. We want what's best for our kids. She has no family living here, and she doesn't have many friends. Jan has low self-esteem, high anxiety and, I believe, she mismanages her finances. Her house is extremely unkempt.

She calls me in tears often, asking for advice and help. I have tried to help her, but it is becoming overwhelming.

I asked my boss for two days off over the holidays. Jan called me shortly after and asked me if I can take care of her son on any days I have off over the holidays so he won't have to go to his day care facility. I feel bad and want to help, but I took the time off to spend much-needed time with my family. I don't want to have to bring her son to my family festivities. Is this wrong of me?

Needless to say, this relationship has added a lot of stress to my life. I tried breaking off the relationship over the summer, and I'm not even sure why it still continues. I feel mean and rude, but I don't want to be – and can't be – this girl's only means of support. — **TRAPPED IN BUFFALO**

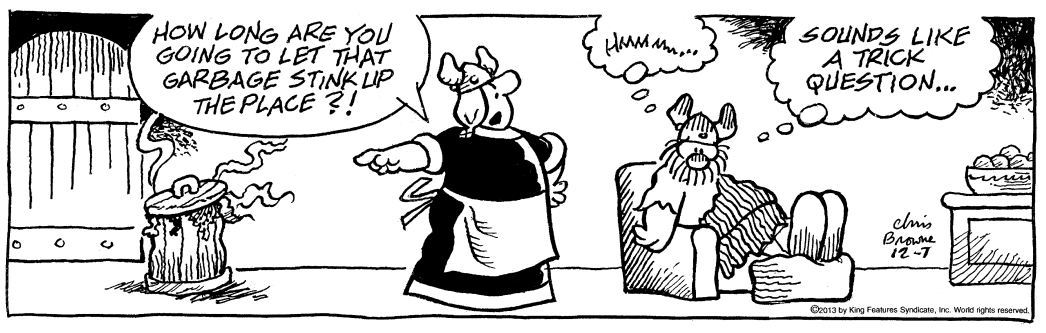
DEAR TRAPPED: It is neither mean nor rude to draw the line when someone's neediness is more than you can cope with. It is OK to say no, and you needn't feel guilty about it. It is also OK to advise someone that low-cost counseling is available in most communities if the person appears unstable or unable to cope with life. When you do, tell her that her needs are more than you are able to handle. If you do, you may not need to end the friendship – she may do it for you, but you'll be doing her a favor.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

COMICS

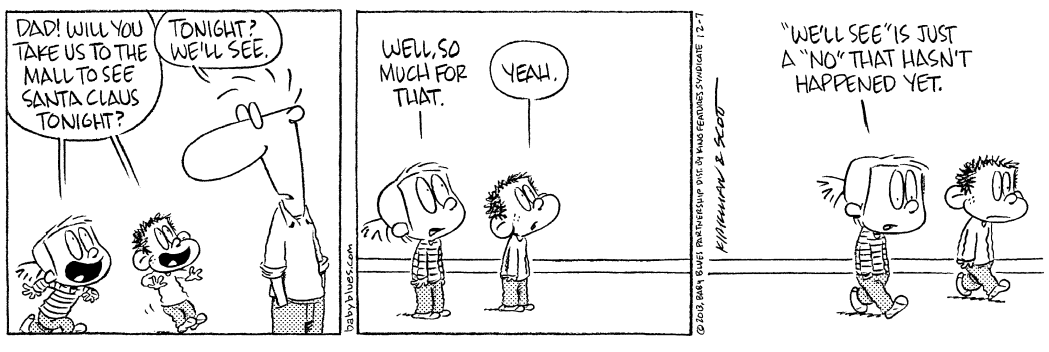
Tundra

Hagar the Horrible

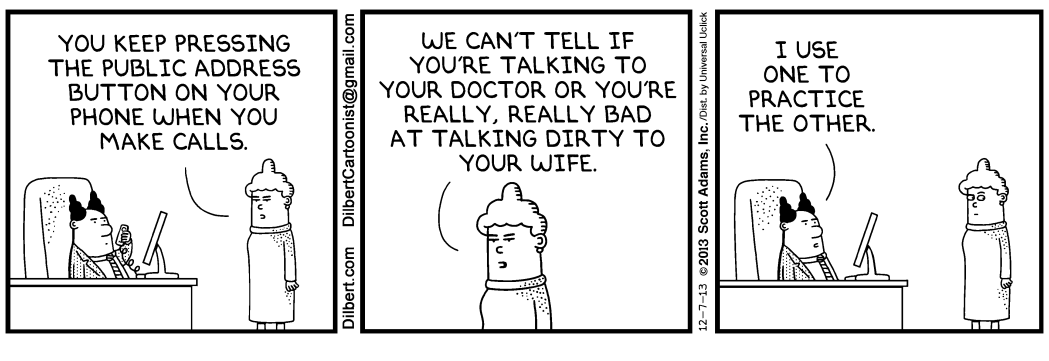


Peanuts

Baby Blues



Dilbert



su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

	3						7	
	5	6	3		9	4	2	
9			2		7			3
		7		3		2		
			5		6			
		4		1		3		
2			1		8			7
	8	3	4		5	9	6	
	7						8	

Instructions for play: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

That's all there is to it. There's no math involved. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic. It's fun. It's challenging. It's addictive!

Solving time is typically from 10 to 30 minutes, depending on your skill and experience. The solution for today's puzzle will be published in Saturday's paper. Or you can go to www.sudoku.com to find the solution.

4	5	8	3	1	6	9	2	7
1	3	6	9	7	2	5	8	4
9	2	7	8	5	4	3	1	6
7	8	4	2	3	5	6	9	1
5	9	2	6	4	1	7	3	8
3	6	1	7	8	9	4	5	2
8	4	3	1	9	7	2	6	5
2	1	5	4	6	3	8	7	9
6	7	9	5	2	8	1	4	3

HOROSCOPES

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20
Participate in something new and interesting this week, Aries. The perfect activity will present itself in the next few weeks, so be sure to keep your eyes open.

TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, delay any upcoming shopping excursions for the time being. Your coffers are getting a bit sparse, and you need to conserve the rest of your funds.

GEMINI - May 22/Jun 21
Listen to advice this week, Gemini. Loved ones only want to help and provide support, so keep that in mind when those closest to you offer some guidance.

CANCER - Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, your suspicions may be aroused by someone who has been paying more attention to you than normal. It could be something completely innocent, but right now you're not sure.

LEO - Jul 23/Aug 23
Every day is a learning process, Leo. You will find that there are a number of new ideas swirling around in your head, and if you pin one down, you may be on to something.

VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22
Your colleagues at work may be making things difficult, Virgo, but there is nothing you can do about it right now. Just work your hardest, and things will turn out for the best.

LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, prepare to juggle multiple responsibilities in the coming days. Be ready to multi-task and expect to be pulled in multiple directions.

SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22
Scorpio, a small misunderstanding turns into a larger battle this week. But you have the power to put the flames out quickly by keeping a cool head.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, you are having so much fun lately that it almost seems like life is a game. Just don't get so caught up in the good times that you overlook your responsibilities.

CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20
Capricorn, you usually take your responsibilities quite seriously, and that is often for the best. Just be sure to let your hair down sometimes and have a little fun.

AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, some irregularities have begun to pop up of late. It is not up to you to figure out what is going on, though. Others will discover the truth.

PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, your head may be in the clouds, but it is quite comfortable up there. Just don't linger up there too long.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER 8
Ian Somerhalder, Actor (35)

DECEMBER 9
John Malkovich, Actor (60)

DECEMBER 10
Kenneth Branagh, Actor (53)

DECEMBER 11
Rita Moreno, Actress (82)

DECEMBER 12
Mayim Bialik, Actress (38)

DECEMBER 13
Wendie Malick, Actress (63)

DECEMBER 14
Jackson Rathbone, Actor (28)

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

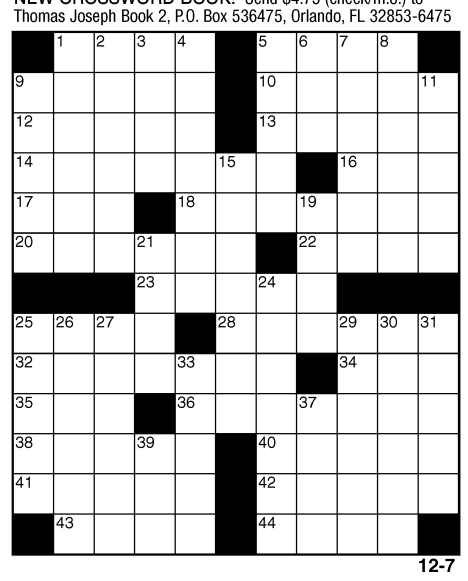
ACROSS
1 One of a bear trio
5 Bud's place
9 Big to-do
10 Squashed circles
12 Fancy neckwear
13 Roofed patio
14 Generous virtue
16 Family
17 Great weight
18 Flying high
20 Be short with
22 Wallet bills
23 Concluded
25 Mystique
28 Beginnings
32 Trapper's job
34 Gettysburg loser
35 Model buy
36 Very hot
38 One of the Kennedys
40 Silly one
41 Plow pioneer
42 Computer key
43 "Blast it!"
44 Pert talk

DOWN
1 Try to budge
2 Secret stuff
3 Penniless
4 Skilled worker
5 Russian river
6 One of Frank's wives
7 Registered
8 Broadway's Stritch
9 Forgoes food
11 Spills the beans
15 Contrary to good manners
19 Reactor parts
21 Brandy base
24 Hires
25 Invited
26 Cohesive
27 Prefer to
29 George and T.S.
30 Past and future
31 Rocker Bob
33 Key
37 Columnist Barrett
39 Historic stretch

B	A	T	T	L	E	■	A	D	A	M	
A	D	O	R	E	R	■	V	E	R	A	
R	O	W	I	N	G	■	A	V	I	D	
■	■	■	T	O	O	K	T	O	■	■	
M	A	D	E	■	■	E	A	T	A	T	
O	L	E	■	J	O	Y	R	I	D	E	
R	I	M	■	A	W	E	■	O	D	E	
A	V	O	I	D	E	D	■	N	U	N	
L	E	T	M	E	■	■	A	S	P	S	
■	■	I	N	D	I	A	N	■	■	■	
A	L	O	E	■	O	L	D	A	G	E	
L	Y	N	X	■	W	E	E	V	I	L	
L	E	S	T	■	A	S	S	E	T	S	

Previous Puzzle

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475



12-7

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Spots for tots
6 Barney's buddy
10 One of the Great Lakes
11 From the area
13 Blown away
14 Sky blue
15 Squirrel's snack
16 Make mistakes
18 In the style of
19 Pioneered, as a movement
22 Early auto
23 Solitary
24 Fall flower
27 More tender
28 Field crop
29 Univ. or acad.
30 Perceptive
35 Cain's mother
36 Writer Rand
37 S&L offering
38 Coup —
40 Detroit player
42 Wear away
43 Boot out
44 Ignored the limit
45 Cars' scars

DOWN
1 Settings for goatees
2 Incur, as debts
3 Furious
4 Violinist's need
5 Scornful person
6 Distress signal
7 Cartoonist Chast
8 Quito's nation
9 "Roseanne" daughter
12 One in charge
17 Letter before sigma
20 Game setting
21 Hawaiian hello
24 Assent
25 Crossword fans
26 Bird's perch
27 Like some candles
29 Bashful
31 Assessed
32 "Eat up!"
33 Put up
34 Pub pastime
39 Sports drink suffix
41 "— had it!"

O	M	A	R	■	■	S	H	I	R	E	
F	A	M	E	D	■	H	U	M	A	N	
F	L	O	O	R	■	E	N	A	C	T	
E	I	N	■	S	T	A	G	G	E	R	
D	A	G	G	E	R	■	■	I	D	A	
■	■	■	O	U	I	S	■	N	I	P	
■	B	I	T	S	■	A	M	E	N	■	
N	A	N	■	S	A	F	E	■	■	■	
O	R	R	■	B	A	G	G	E	R	■	
S	W	A	G	G	E	R	■	R	A	E	
H	A	N	O	I	■	I	R	A	T	E	
O	R	G	A	N	■	S	E	P	A	L	
W	E	E	D	S	■	B	E	T	S	■	

Previous Puzzle

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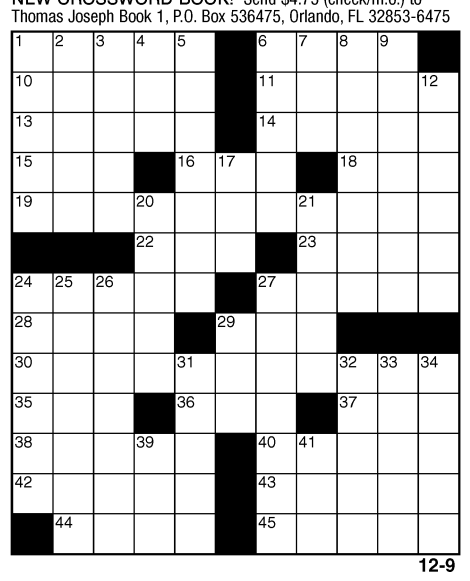

12-9

Daily Cryptoquote – Here's how to work it:

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-7 CRYPTOQUOTE

YL UBXHRM WV LVT HN QVW WV HQETHPM GFL VP GFHWFMP, STW ATNW MQAVL LVTP HRM RPMUY GFHDM HW'N VQ LVTP CDUWM. — WFVPQWVQ GHDBMP

Previous Cryptoquote: ONE SHOULD AIM NOT AT BEING POSSIBLE TO UNDERSTAND, BUT AT BEING IMPOSSIBLE TO MISUNDERSTAND. – Quintilian