

# Married couple's sex life has become all about the numbers

**DEAR ABBY:** I have been married to a wonderful man for 30 years. Our marriage may not be perfect, but it's quite good.

My dilemma is this: My husband keeps track of every time we have sex and has a personal goal of 100 times a year. In 2013, he informed me that we'd had sex only 76 times, and that was not adequate for him. He was quite upset about it.

Do you think tracking your sex life is normal, and what do you think about a couple married for 30-plus years having sex 76 times in a year? Is that normal? Also, keep in mind that he travels for business and is gone about 60 days a year. — **PRESSURED**

**DEAR PRESSURED:** Your husband sounds like a college student who is striving to get 100 notches on his belt. Rather than obsess about the number of times you have had sex, the quality of the experience should be more important. Fifty GREAT times a year would be better than 100 so-so times, one would think. And no, I do not think your husband's preoccupation is "normal" — whatever normal is these days.

**DEAR ABBY:** After six years of unsuccessful fertility work, my husband and I were forced to give up. Last summer his sister offered to be a surrogate for us, and



DEAR ABBY

we'll use a donor egg since I have none. We have told only a few people.

We're having an embryo transfer next week and thought we'd wait until after the first trimester to "announce." But what is the proper way to do it when it's not actually I who is expecting? And is there etiquette for having a baby shower in this situation?

We're excited and proud of this opportunity, but it takes a lot of explaining for people to understand and not be judgmental. This is the closest we'll ever get to experiencing pregnancy, and I want to enjoy it to the fullest. — **MODERN MOM-TO-BE IN WASHINGTON**

**DEAR MOM-TO-BE:** Congratulations on your pregnancy. Because it takes explaining, I recommend you share the happy news with your family and close friends by telling them in person. That way, you can answer any questions they may have directly. When

you want "the world" to know, you may decide to send a mass email or post photos on the Internet.

As to having a baby shower — because this is a happy event you are celebrating and you will need things for the baby, I'm sure a friend will want to host one for you. Be sure to include your sister-in-law if she would like to attend.

**DEAR ABBY:** My 18-year-old granddaughter is seeing a 30-year-old man. What can I say to let her know he is way too old for her? I don't want her to hate me. — **LOVING GRANDMA IN FLORIDA**

**DEAR LOVING GRANDMA:** I don't think that telling your granddaughter the man is too old for her would be a good idea because it would imply that she is too young, and no 18-year-old wants to hear that. Tell her instead that you think she would have a lot more in common with someone closer to her age. This is particularly true if she is still in high school.

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](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

## su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocorn

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

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](http://www.sudoku.com) to find the solution.

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

## HELOISE'S KITCHENEERING BY HELOISE

### Microwave Has Standing Orders

Dear Heloise: Whenever I heat up a frozen meal in the MICROWAVE, one of the last directions is to allow the food to "stand in the microwave" for a few minutes before removing. Why is this? — Ellen L. in Illinois

Standing time means that the food is really still cooking a little longer. In a microwave, even when you turn it off or it stops, those little "waves" are still bouncing around! By letting the food "stand," it finishes the cooking. Also, it's a safety measure, especially with liquids. It's called superheating, and putting a spoon or fork in the dish too soon can cause the liquid to splash. — Heloise

### Add To Soup

Dear Heloise: After a party, I had a chunk of cream cheese with hot-pepper jelly left over. I put it into my potato soup. It was really good. It made the soup a little more creamy, and the pepper jelly gave it a little more of a bite. — Amelia S. in California

Great hint, and a tasty one at that. Soup is a good way to stretch the food budget and use up what may be left over in the refrigerator. My Heloise's Spectacular Soups pamphlet is filled with family and friend recipes and hints to save you time in the kitchen. To order one, send \$5 and a long, self-addressed, stamped (70 cents) envelope to: Heloise/Soups, P.O. Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001. Save cheese rinds in the freezer and add them to soup for extra flavor. — Heloise

### Celery Seasonings

Dear Heloise: Would you please explain the differences among celery seeds, celery flakes and celery salt? Which would be best for chicken-noodle soup, as I never use a whole stalk of fresh celery? — Ruth in California

Sure I can! Celery seed is a dried fruit (seed), not like regular celery. It has a very strong flavor. It usually is used when making pickles, or it is added to pasta salad, potato salad or egg salad. But use only a small dash, because the taste is very intense.

Celery flakes are dried, chopped pieces of celery, including both the leaves and the stalk. The flakes can be used in place of fresh celery in recipes.

Of course, you won't have that crunch, but the taste is pretty close.

Finally, celery salt is a mixture of celery seed and salt. It can be used in coleslaw, potato salad, macaroni salad and tuna salad. — Heloise

P.S.: A little goes a long way, so buy the smallest container you can.

### Softer Spread

Dear Heloise: I love your column in the Ventura County (Calif.) Star and read it every morning.

I read the hint about spreading peanut butter with the back of a spoon so as not to tear the bread, and I was compelled to write my hint. I put some peanut butter in a small, microwave-safe dish and heat it for several seconds until it becomes soft enough to spread easily. — Elaine G. in California

## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

### ACROSS

1 Cup holder

7 Use a dagger

11 Wear roughly

12 By way of, informally

13 High school events

14 Woodwind part

15 Prepare to play

17 Analogy words

20 Backpack part

23 Extreme

24 Gigantic

26 Stage prompt

27 Coach Parseghian

28 Washington base-baller, for short

29 Expand on

31 Espionage org.

32 Iberian nation

33 Hawk

34 Depleted

37 Enthralled

39 Without delay

43 Fencing weapon

44 Movie studio department

45 Swiss capital

46 White sale buy

### DOWN

1 Feeling down

2 Lawyers' org.

3 Coffee dispenser

4 Bear-bearing tree

5 Unspoiled spot

6 Take a breather

7 Walks proudly

8 One Twain title character

9 Verb for you

10 Future flower

16 School paper

### Previous Puzzle

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

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11						12			
13						14			
15						16			
17	18	19				20		21	22
23				24	25				
26				27			28		
29			30				31		
32							33		
34						35	36		
37	38					39		40	41
43						44			
45						46			

4-23

## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

### ACROSS

1 Play makeup

5 Big party

10 Massenet opera

12 Aerie builder

13 Thumper's pal

14 Grove sight

15 Pharaoh's symbol

16 Tracy/Hepburn film

18 Service for a social

20 Clumsy fellow

21 Great serves

23 Zeus or Apollo

24 Capital of Italia

26 Heaps

28 Gloss target

29 Hold power

31 "— had it!"

32 Romantic time of day

36 Way of thinking

39 Hole number

40 Invigorate

41 Select group

43 "Three Sisters" sister

44 Begets

### DOWN

1 Ready to swing

2 Pursue

3 Lightning home

4 Bro or sis

5 Wagers

6 Escapade

7 Long in the past

8 Think about overnight

9 Checked out

11 Brandy cocktail

17 Summer, in Paris

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

### Previous Puzzle

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

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13						14			
15				16	17				
18			19				20		
21						22		23	
24	25					26	27		
28				29	30				
31					32			33	34
36			37	38				39	
40									
43						41	42		
45						44			
						46			

4-24

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.

### 4-23 CRYPTOQUOTE

E T N U G X E C D K H D V K N G Q  
D K K E D K N I E X J X E T D E G Q  
I N C N B H X J I W E M G M G B R X  
M T N I G I N M J K K R G .  
— E T G U D X Y N Q Q N B X G I

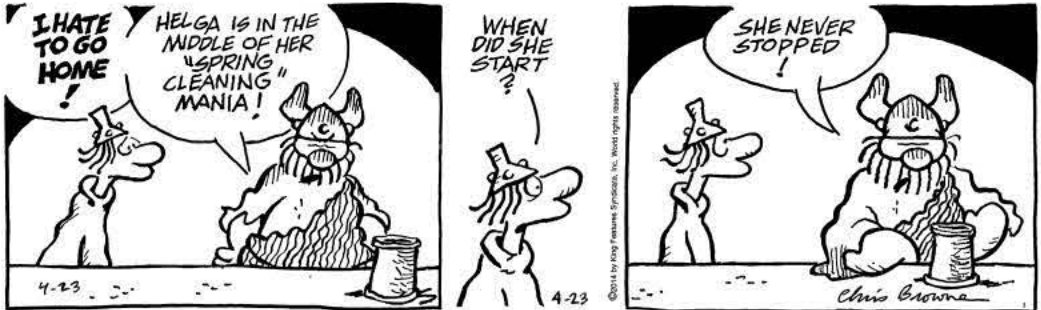
Previous Cryptoquote: THERE IS, AFTER ALL, A KIND OF HAPPINESS IN UNHAPPINESS, IF IT'S THE RIGHT UNHAPPINESS. — Jonathan Franzen

## COMICS

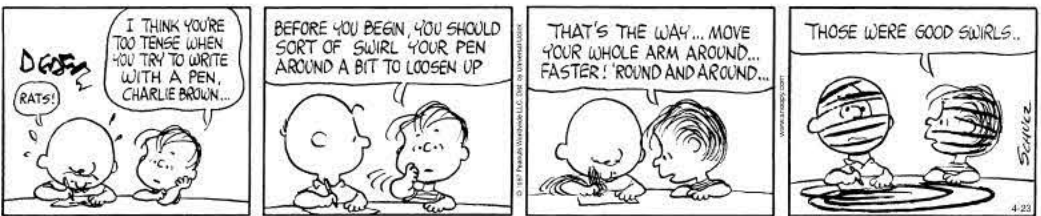
### Tundra



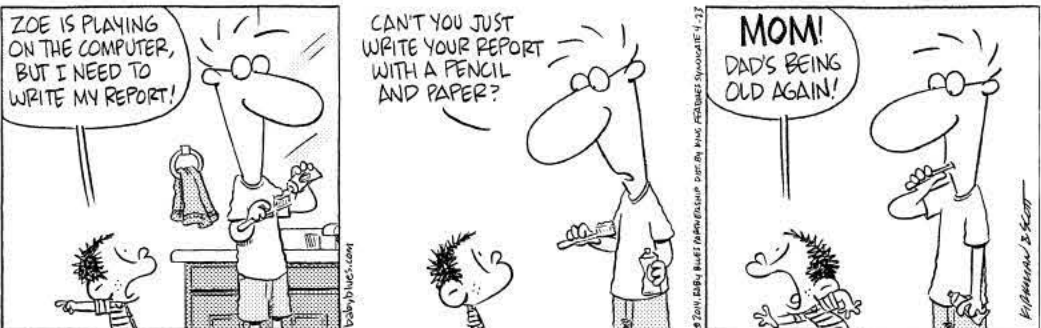
### Hagar the Horrible



### Peanuts



### Baby Blues



### Dilbert

