

Girl can conquer shyness by reaching out to others

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 14-year-old girl who just started high school. I started to notice boys when I was in middle school, and I'd like to start dating soon.

The problem is I've never had a close friend who was a boy, and the idea isn't natural to me. How can I ask a boy out if I don't even grasp the concept of being friends with one? I'm frustrated over this, especially because I really like one particular guy.

The only advice I have been given is, "Get over your fear and just TALK to him." This isn't very helpful to me. I want to know how to get over my fear! Abby, your thoughts would be appreciated. — **CAN'T FIND THE NERVE IN OHIO**

DEAR CAN'T FIND THE NERVE: I'll gladly share some thoughts. The first is I hope you realize how many girls and guys your age feel EXACTLY the same way you do. Social skills don't come naturally to everyone – but they can be learned. And like any learned skill, they take practice.

The surest cure for shyness – which is the "fear" you are experiencing – is to forget about yourself and concentrate on the other person. Smile and introduce yourself if the guy doesn't know you. If you



DEAR ABBY

share a class with him or know an activity he's involved in, ask a question about it. He's not good at sports? Not musical? Ask him about a class assignment.

You don't have to be brilliant or witty. Try leading off with a friendly remark or a compliment. ("Nice shirt, cellphone," etc.) I know very few people who don't appreciate a compliment. Overcoming shyness takes practice, so don't go after the boy you "really like" at first. Make a point of smiling and saying hello to everyone. It's friendly, it's welcoming.

Keep in mind that the majority of people have the same insecurities you do. Many of them will respond positively because they appreciate being noticed. That's how you make friends of both genders. I have a booklet that offers even more suggestions. The title is "How to Be Popular," and it contains hints for

polishing social skills for people of all ages. It can be ordered by sending your name and address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price. Remember, you don't have to be the prettiest or smartest girl in school. But you CAN be one of the nicest.

Show an interest in others. Be honest but always tactful. Cultivate your own interests so you will have something to talk about with others. If there are clubs at your school, join the ones that interest you. It's another way of making friends of both sexes.

Most young people go out in groups these days. So, if you and some friends plan to do something (and after you have been friendly and let the young man you like notice you), smile and ask if he'd like to come along. If he's shy, it's a way of making HIM feel less self-conscious, too. Good luck!

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.

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| | | | | 7 2 | | |
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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.

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

HELOISE'S KITCHENEERING BY HELOISE

From Cake Mix Come Brownies

Dear Heloise: A recipe for CHOCOLATE BROWNIES appeared in your column years ago. Unfortunately, I misplaced it. Could you please reprint it? — Brenda H., via email

Absolutely! Here is the recipe for Heloise's brownies from a cake mix. These are more cakelike brownies, but they will do in a pinch and with things you usually have on hand. Grab the following ingredients:

1 egg
3/4 cup water plus more as needed

1/2 cup chopped pecans (optional)

1 (18.25 ounces) box devil's food cake mix

Preheat the oven to 350 F and grease a 13-by-9-inch pan.

In a large bowl, mix together the egg, water and nuts (if using). Add the cake mix and STIR WELL. The batter will be thick; however, if it is too thick, add only a teaspoonful of water at a time to help thin it. Just be sure NOT to over-mix. Pour into the greased pan and smooth the top.

Bake for about 20-25 minutes for chewy brownies. If you like them more of a cake consistency, then bake them for a few minutes longer. You need to watch them and test for how "done" you like them. If you like desserts, especially cakes, then order my Heloise Cake Recipes pamphlet by sending \$3 and a long, self-addressed, stamped (66 cents) envelope to: Heloise/Cakes, P.O. Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001. Be sure to let the brownies cool before cutting, and use a plastic knife to cut them with little or no sticking! — Heloise

NO EGGSHELLS

Dear Heloise: Some time ago, I think you wrote NOT to put eggshells down the garbage disposal. Please tell me why, and don't say, "Because I said so!" — John in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Well, John, some experts suggest that a lot of eggshells can damage a disposal, but I personally don't see how. The real point is that in large amounts, they also can clog the drains further down in the pipes! This is why you must run A LOT of water before, during and after a food item is put in the disposal. Instead of putting these shells down the sink, try using them as compost. — Heloise

OATMEAL OPTIONS

Dear Heloise: When making cookies that call for oatmeal, what kind is the best to bake cookies with -- the one-minute oatmeal, or the old-fashioned kind? I read your column every day and thank you for all the hints and advice. — Sharon C. in Houston

You can use the one-minute oatmeal or regular when baking. Both have the same flavor; the only difference is in the appearance of the cookies. The quicker-cooking oatmeal has a finer texture, so the oatmeal will be blended into the cookie. When using regular oatmeal, you will be able to see the oats in the cookie. — Heloise

PREPARING CALAMARI

Dear Heloise: When making calamari, an easy solution for removing the tough inner membrane of a squid involves the use of tweezers. Easy to grab onto the membrane and then remove it. — Araceli in San Antonio

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Rude look

6 Urge on

10 Labrador explorer

11 Kitchen come-on

12 Rust, for one

13 Caravan creature

14 Cloth tatters

15 Impair

16 Magic org.

17 Pool unit

18 Dissenter's vote

19 Divvied

22 Exile isle

23 Washer unit

26 Added excitement to

29 Cork sound

32 To's opposite

33 Singer Tormé

34 Asylum seeker

36 Opera set in Egypt

37 Math comparison

38 Showed over

39 Skimpy swimwear

40 Make a speech

41 Painter Holbein

42 Apartment sign

DOWN

1 Derides

2 Like luxury goods

3 John Adams's wife

4 Reactor parts

5 Summer on the Seine

6 Tot transport

7 Eternal City resident

8 Last letter

9 Big name in Chicago

11 Mexican resort

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Previous Puzzle

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|----|----------------------------|----|---------------------|
| 15 | June | 27 | Hot blood |
| 16 | honorée | 28 | Sun |
| 17 | Vaulting | | circler |
| 18 | game | 29 | Australia city |
| 19 | "Survivor" network | 30 | Nebraska city |
| 20 | "The Bells" writer | 31 | Climber's spike |
| 21 | Fleet leader | 32 | Cotton seeders |
| 22 | Obstetrician's calculation | 33 | Stream-lined prefix |
| 23 | Go bad | | |

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

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| 19 | | | 20 | | | 21 | | |
| 22 | | | | | 23 | | 24 | 25 |
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| 29 | 30 | 31 | | 32 | | | 33 | |
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| 37 | | | | | | | 38 | |
| 39 | | | | | | | 40 | |
| 41 | | | | | | | 42 | |

9-18

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Fashion

6 URL part

11 — Gay (historic bomber)

12 Off limits

13 Most new drivers

14 Skilled

15 Smooth and lustrous

17 Hot brew

19 Purpose

20 Comic's offering

23 Words from an insulted friend

25 Lug

26 Fizzles

28 Cockpit guesses

29 Doctoral papers

30 Wine choice

31 Writer Rita — Brown

32 Spot

33 Spanish city

35 Plane part

38 Celtic priest

41 Acrobatic

42 Coffee bar order

43 Eccentric

44 Hawke of Hollywood

DOWN

1 Old hand

2 Wallet bill

3 Proceeds

4 Arm bone

5 New York's time zone

6 Position

7 Lord's wife

8 Playwright Burrows

9 Soak up

10 Sizzling

16 All things considered

17 Bengal beast

18 Ham it up

20 Deteriorates

31 Till fill

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| E | M | U | | N | E | Z | | S | U | E | | | | |
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| | | | | | | R | E | L | Y | | D | O | S | E |

Previous Puzzle

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|----|----------------|
| 21 | — | 33 | Incline |
| 22 | Grows in Brooklyn" | 34 | "Blast it!" |
| 23 | Gaggle members | 35 | Scoundrel |
| 24 | Naval initials | 36 | In the past |
| 25 | English article | 37 | Drill part |
| 26 | Cajole | 38 | "Give — rest!" |
| 27 | Till fill | 40 | Comfy room |

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

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| 41 | | | | | 42 | | | | |
| 43 | | | | | 44 | | | | |

9-19

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.

9-18 CRYPTOQUOTE

L M P A P V Y I U R I D Y G J P N G N P J L

V J Z M V U E M G G E R M P J L M P

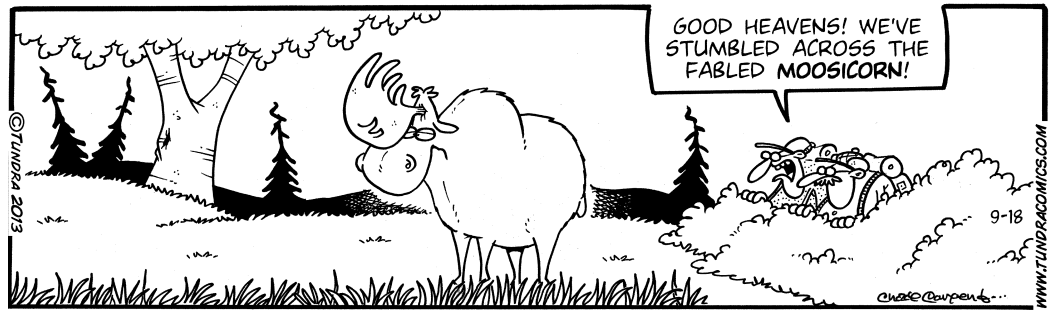
E G G A G B P J Y I J E U P L Y L M P

O F L F A P V J . — T A I M I N T A P P J P

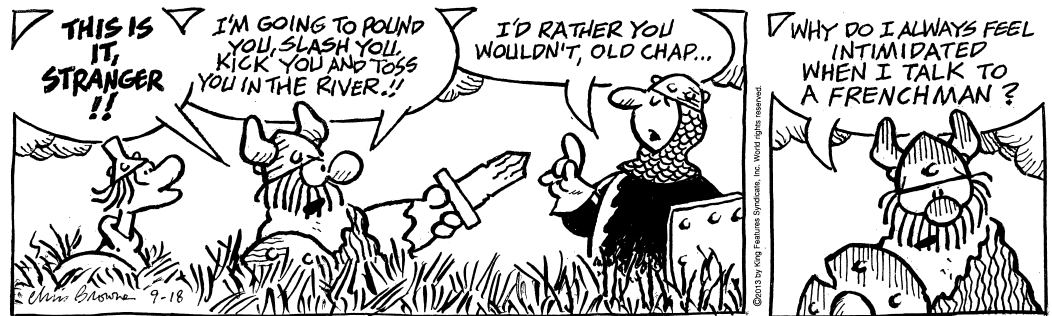
Previous Cryptoquote: ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE ALSO DREAM BEINGS. DREAMING TIES ALL MANKIND TOGETHER. — Jack Kerouac

COMICS

Tundra



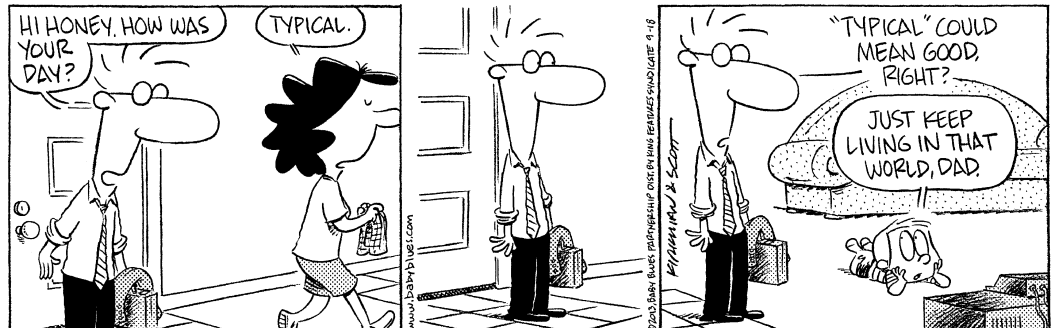
Hagar the Horrible



Peanuts



Baby Blues



Dilbert

