Brother's wife puts pressure on husband

Sense and Sensitivity

Harriette Cole

DEAR HARRIETTE: My younger brother got married last year. This is his first marriage, and he's in his 50s. In some ways, I think getting married later can be a bit easier: You know what you want, you know your boundaries and you are likely more established (professionally and financially). I think in some ways that rang true for my brother, but I think after they made things official, his wife has shown him different sides of herself. She moved into my brother's longtime home when they got married and is now requesting that he purchase something new with more space — despite having two spare bedrooms in their current home. She works full-time but does not want to contribute to any bills. My brother seems somber. He'll talk to me about the pressure sometimes, but he tries his best not to express anger or resentment. He'd been planning for early retirement but is now reworking his plans to stay in the workforce a bit longer. How can I support my brother as he tries to handle this new pressure gracefully? — Sister-in-Law

DEAR SISTER-IN-LAW: While marriage does require compromise, not every requirement or request has to be honored. It's too bad that your brother and his wife didn't talk about these things beforehand and map out a plan for the future, especially something as important as where they want to live. Obviously, you cannot control what he does, but you might recommend to him that the two of them sit down and review their goals for the future based on available resources, needs and desires. It seems reasonable that if she wants them to buy a bigger house, she should be willing to contribute. This is their life, though, and they must determine responsibilities and choices.

Mother feels overlooked

Dear Annie

Annie Lane

Dear Annie: I'm writing this concerning my family. I have five sons and one daughter who are all grown and have children.

My third son, "Jake," has two adult daughters and an adult son. When Jake's two daughters were kids, I went head over heels in buying things for them. The son wasn't born yet. I bought nothing but the best for the girls, and now that they are in their mid-30s, I don't hear a word from them. I bought them stuff from a very expensive boutique, yet I don't even get a phone call on Mother's Day or my birthday from them saying, "Happy Mother's Day, Grandma" or, "Happy birthday, Grandma."

And it's not just this year; it's every year. I never hear from them. But on the other hand, my daughter-in-law's mother is deceased, and they go to her grave on Mother's Day and any other holiday, posting on Facebook saying, "Happy Mother's Day, Grandma." But they can't even pick up the phone and call their grandma who is still alive to say "happy Mother's Day" or "happy birthday."

When I look back, I realize that I also gave them lots of love and took them to church, and when they were kids, they stayed at my house most of the time. It's not just monetary things. I feel so left out of my grandchildren's lives. There is much more that I can say about this situation, but that's all for now. — Brokenhearted in Ohio

Dear Brokenhearted: Assuming that there has not been a huge fight or reason that they are upset with you, my guess is that they got busy in their lives. It is petty to focus on the expensive gifts that you gave them as children and does not give you the best look. Instead of complaining about all you did for them and how they don't appreciate you, switch the narrative in your head and focus on how much you love and miss them.

Then focus on ways you can connect with them. Reach out to your son and ask him what they would really be interested in doing with you. Give to them your time, love and attention, and my guess is that you will get it back tenfold. Try to let go of the jealousy you feel when they visit their deceased grandmother, and look at it as what beautiful grandchildren you have — that they honor their grandmother.

Once you let go of your bitterness about people not behaving exactly as you think they should, you will be surprised by how kind and wonderful they can be.

What we put in is what we get out. Make sure you call them on their birthdays and show them the unconditional love that you want from them and that they want from you. Don't get hung up on everything they do wrong, and instead get hung up on everything they do right.

Annie Lane's second anthology — "How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" featuring favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation — is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit http://www.creatorspublishing.com for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

HOROSCOPE — AUGUST 31

Astrograph

Eugenia Last

Take the time to review every facet of every situation, and exhaust your options. Refuse to let anyone dictate what you do next when only you can make that choice. You have more going for you than you realize. Trust and believe in yourself, and you will thrive.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Consider the outcome before you start the process. Take the initiative to shape your surroundings to suit your needs, and it will make reaching your goals much easier.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — A passionate plea will lead to outstanding results. Speak up, and your persuasive outcry will be heard. A change of plans will lead to an interesting and unexpected encounter.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Take better care of your mental and physical well-being. Refuse to let stress filter into aspects of your life that require common sense and immediate attention.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Savor the moments that matter. Share your experiences, thoughts and feelings. Focus on doing your best and helping those around you meet their expectations.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Keep life simple. Surround yourself with helpful people who offer sound advice and support. Consider healthy choices and fine-tune your lifestyle to suit your needs.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Reach out to those in a position to help you, and you'll get a sense of what and how you can invest efficiently in your future. Be bold and brave, and you'll benefit from doing your best to stand out.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Kindness is a blessing, but also a vulnerability if you are too eager to please. Know your worth and set boundaries and limitations with those who are anxious to take advantage of you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — A change to your schedule will position you for an adventure. Short trips, getting together with old friends and revisiting dreams will change your perspective and your direction.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Be precise regarding what matters to you, but also be willing to compromise. Balance, integrity and feeling good about an agreement you reach will make a difference in how you feel about yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Stick to the script. If you keep waffling or changing your story, you'll lose the confidence of those you count on for support. Giving back, sharing and caring go hand in hand with achieving success.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Don't get caught in someone else's crossfire. Avoid volatile situations or those who exhibit excessive behavior. Let go of what no longer works for you, and start dancing to the beat of your drum.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Engage in what and with who excites you. Social events, travel and reconnecting with old friends you miss will brighten your day. Choose simplicity over complexity, and you'll win every time.

DO JUST ONE THING

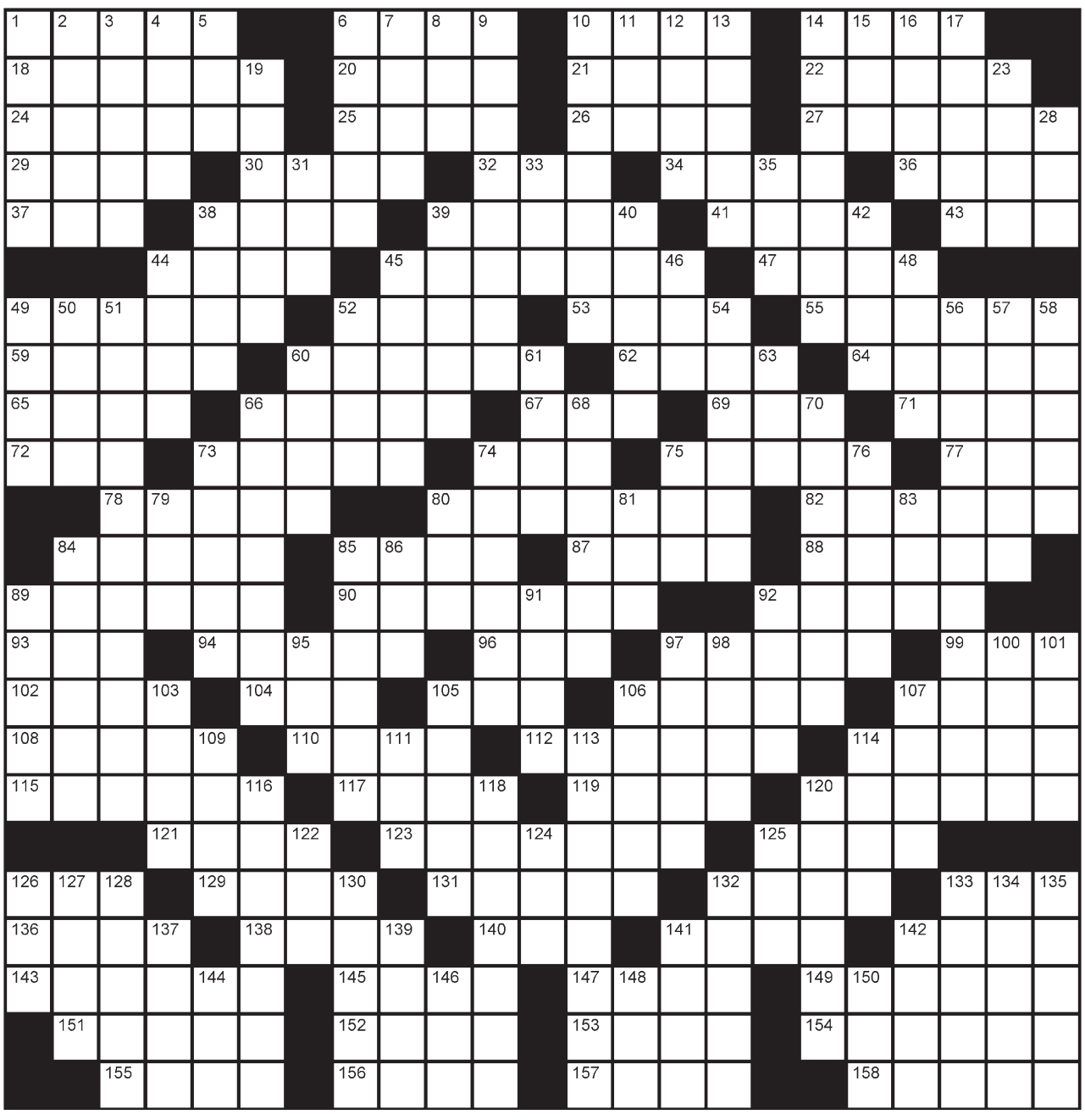
You don't want unused medications falling into the wrong hands, so flushing them down the toilet might seem like the right solution, but it's not. Certain medications can contaminate waterways and disrupt fragile ecosystems. Instead, return them to your pharmacy for proper disposal. Many locations even provide secure drop-off boxes for easy, safe returns.

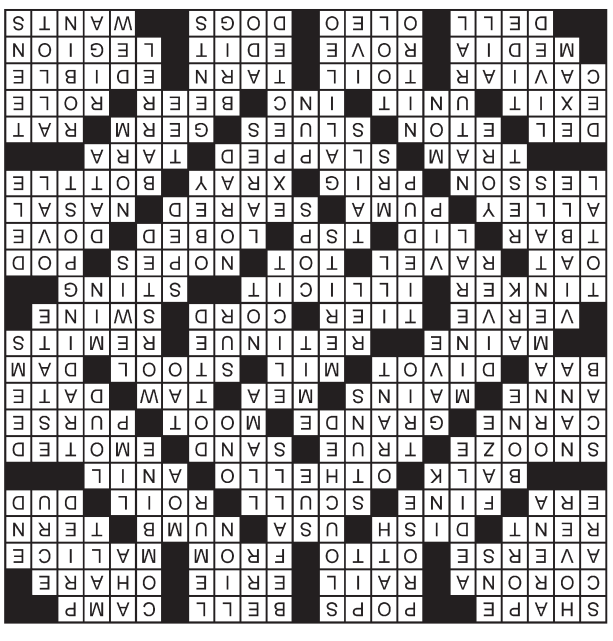
— Danny Seo

CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Condition
6 Bursts
10 "Saved by the —"
14 Tent city
18 Circle of light around the sun
20 Track
21 Ohio's lake
22 Midway alternative
24 Disinclined
25 Director — Preminger
26 Word on a gift tag
27 Spite
29 Hire for a while
30 Platter
32 — Today
34 Unfeeling
36 Seabird
37 Baseball stat
38 Superior
39 Boat used for races
41 Make turbid
43 Failure
44 Stop short
45 The Moor of Venice
47 Indigo
49 Get some shuteye
52 Genuine
53 Hourglass contents
55 Chewed the scenery
59 Chili con —
60 Rio —
62 Debatable
64 Pucker
65 "— of Green Gables"
66 Large pipes
67 — culpa
69 Playing marble
71 Month, day and year
72 Ovine cry
73 Chunk of turf
74 A thousand thou
75 Taboret
77 Water barrier
78 The Pine Tree State
80 Entourage
82 Sends, as payment
84 Vitality
85 Wedding cake part
87 Insulated wire
88 Pigs
89 "— Tailor Soldier Spy"
90 Unlawful
92 Smart
93 Cereal grain
94 "Bolero" composer Maurice —
96 Child
97 Slangy denials
99 Seed case
102 Ski lift (Hyph.)
104 Box top
105 Recipe meas.
106 Having rounded parts
107 Peace symbol
108 Tin Pan —
110 Cougar
112 Burned the surface of
114 Of the nose
115 Thing to learn
117 Prudish one
119 Diagnostic picture (Hyph.)
120 Flask
121 Streetcar
123 Hit with open hand
125 Scarlett's home
126 Punta — Este
129 English school
131 Skids
132 Virus
133 Faithless one
136 Go offstage
138 Module
140 Abbr. in business
141 Lager
142 Actor's part
143 Sturgeon roe
145 Labor
147 Mountain lake
149 Fit as food
151 Means of mass communication
152 Wander
153 Redact
154 Very great in number
155 PC maker
156 Bogus butter
157 Canines
158 Wishes

DOWN
1 Alarm
2 Hang in the air
3 Hippodrome
4 City on a coast
5 Naval officer (Abbr.)
6 Everyday language
7 Promise
8 Hole
9 Sat in a lazy way
10 Happens to
11 "To — is human ..."
12 MGM mascot
13 Madagascar animal
14 Mix
15 "Eureka!"
16 Brewing substance
17 Snooped
19 Old Roman official
23 Beige
28 Bring to a close
31 Writing fluid
33 "Peggy — Got Married"
35 Extinct bird
38 Unnerve
39 Dazes
40 Andes animal
42 Walk with difficulty
44 Femur, e.g.
45 Praying figure
46 Lennon's widow
48 Raucous
49 Strikebreaker
50 Zola title
51 Garden plants
52 Performing group
54 Marked with regular spots
56 Store of a kind (2 wds.)
57 All of one's property
58 Judges
60 Produced
61 Send forth
63 Chinese "way"
66 Valuable rock
68 Evoke
70 Woolen yarn
73 Frogman
74 Is worthy of
75 California's Big —
76 Wonderland writer — Carroll
79 Boat
80 Kinsman (Abbr.)
81 "— a chance!"
83 Hr. part
84 That can be done
85 Busy (2 wds.)
86 State near Wisc.
89 Complete
91 — and robbers
92 Hurried
95 A-lister, for short
97 Santa tracker org.
98 Comply
100 Racetrack shape
101 Remove
103 — and relaxation
105 Coin toss bet
106 — and penates
107 Numerical info
109 Days past
111 "— Doubtfire"
113 Anticipated
114 Standard, for short
116 Innate
118 Early Italian astronomer of note
120 Cask
122 Calendar col.
124 Play on words
125 Peg for golfers
126 Winter mo.
127 School event
128 Dwelled
130 Explosive stuff
132 Fellows
133 Batman's sidekick
134 Apportion
135 Time of life
137 Neap —
139 Implement
141 Ship's jail
142 City in Latvia
144 Trouble
146 "— Got a Secret"
148 Fuss
150 Lawn moisture





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