

Uncle’s expectations unreasonably high

DEAR HARRIETTE: My “Uncle Ron” raised his son and daughter all alone, and I think it was a struggle for him. Over the years, he put affection on the back burner and became results-driven. He did his best to make sure his children were A students, hard-working, well-behaved, well-spoken and aligned for success. I think his rigid parenting style took a toll on his son, my cousin “Matt.” When Matt went away for college, he was no longer an A student. Although he managed to graduate, he struggled to find work afterward. Whenever we’re all together, Uncle Ron is judgmental and doesn’t shy away from sharing his disappointment in his kids. I can see how it affects my cousin, but I don’t know what to say to my uncle. I chime in sometimes to remind him that Matt is on his way and has a good job now, but nothing is good enough for my uncle. I want to get through to him, but he’s so stuck in his ways. How can I stop him from emotionally scarring my cousin further? — Never Enough



Sense and Sensitivity

Harriette Cole

DEAR NEVER ENOUGH: Your uncle may never listen, but you can try talking to him privately. Point out that you know how hard he worked to take care of his children to prepare them to become responsible adults. Note that you think he did a great job, and add that you have noticed how harshly he treats Matt and that it seems to be negatively affecting him. Give Uncle Ron the example of how he publicly berates his son about his shortcomings in front of the family and how uncomfortable and embarrassing that is. Suggest that he notice the positive things about his son and celebrate those a little more.

Your uncle may get angry with you, but at least you will have said it. Moreover, stay in touch with your cousin and be his peer cheerleader. He will appreciate that.

HOROSCOPE — SEPTEMBER 7

Take the time to invest in the future and prepare to grow with the markets and trends on the horizon. Don't wait for others to surpass you; take the initiative. Lead the way, and don't look back. Your strength is having the courage to push forward alone.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Stick to the facts and be sure to share the truth with those blowing situations out of proportion. Positive change begins with honesty, trust and compromise.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Pump it up and make things happen. Don't be a slouch when there is so much you can do to advance. Get in the game and do your part, and you'll rise to the top.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Share your thoughts and feelings and align yourself with those who have similar concerns. A smile and a positive attitude will help you gain momentum and achieve excellent results.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Choose your battles wisely and channel your energy appropriately. Take the high road and bring about positive change and self-improvement. Physical activity will ease internal stress.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Place your attention on money, health and looking and doing your best. Plan your day strategically and optimize your time to suit your goal. Protect your assets.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Put pressure on yourself to adjust to the changes happening around you and to move forward. Get a handle on what makes you tick, and try to incorporate a passionate attitude into your everyday routine.



Astrograph

Eugenia Last

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — The ability to bend and work your way through times of trouble will strengthen your character and help you gain respect. Follow through with promises. Actions speak louder than words.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Don't lose sight of reality. Take pride in what you know and can do to improve your life. Hang in there; the best is yet to come. Trust and believe in yourself, and those you encounter will follow suit.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Work quietly behind the scenes where interference is easier to control. Building a solid foundation that offers peace of mind will be worth far more than the stress that comes from comparing yourself to others.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Turn your attention to your surroundings and make improvements that ease stress and make your life easier to navigate. Avoid criticism and those who make you feel inadequate.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Broaden your awareness and surround yourself with people and possessions that contribute positive vibes to your environment. Protect against injury, insult and ill health.

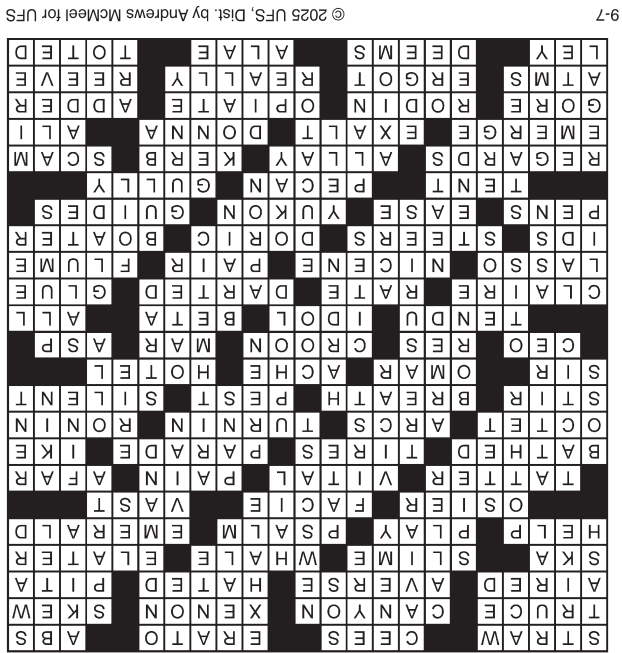
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Esthetics will play a role in how you feel and what you can do to improve your life. Whether you want to make physical changes to your appearance or your surroundings, the timing is good.

DO JUST ONE THING

Love having houseplants at home? Be sure to use a peat-free soil mix. Peat moss is harvested from peat bogs — unique ecosystems that store carbon, regulate aquatic systems by acting like natural sponges, and support di-

verse wildlife. Removing peat disrupts these habitats and contributes to environmental damage. Instead, choose soil mixes made with coconut coir, organic compost and biochar (a charcoal by-product).

— Danny Seo



Power of pause important

Dear Annie: I read the letter from “Sideline Mom With a Heavy Heart” with deep empathy. My husband coached both of our sons, now grown men, in baseball, wrestling and football. While he was not as intense as the father described in that letter, he certainly had his moments.

Early on, I sat him down and said, “No one feels worse about missing a play or losing a match than our son does. From now on, we’re going to use the 48-hour rule. For the first 48 hours after a game or match, the only thing you’re allowed to say is, ‘I love you, and I’m proud of you.’ After those two days, when emotions have calmed and the disappointment has faded, then — and only then



Dear Annie

Annie Lane

— you can talk about the game.”

This approach worked beautifully. Our sons enjoyed playing sports. They went on to become state champions in wrestling and later wrestled in college. Most importantly, they had a positive experience and maintained a close, loving relationship with their father.

A few of my husband’s coaching colleagues adopted the 48-hour rule as well, and they saw great results in their own families. I hope this idea might help “Sideline

Mom” and others facing similar challenges. — A Happy Mom of Husband-Coached Sons

Dear Happy Mom: You have certainly learned the power of the pause. Taking a moment to reflect rather than react out of strong emotion is always a valuable practice, especially when it comes to parenting and coaching.

The 48-hour rule you shared is very wise. Giving children time to process their own disappointment before piling on criticism or analysis creates space for growth, resilience and trust. It allows love to lead the way, not frustration or perfectionism.

Thank you for sharing your positive experience. I hope it

encourages other parents and coaches to see how important it is to pause and think before yelling, reacting harshly or sending a message they might later regret. In a world that often rewards quick reactions, your story is a beautiful reminder that patience, timing and kindness are far more powerful.

Your sons are lucky to have grown up in a home where love and support came first — and it sounds like their relationship with their father is stronger because of it.

Follow Annie Lane on Instagram at @dearannieofficial. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 “Turkey in the —”
- 6 Middling grades
- 10 Muse of love poetry
- 15 Core muscles
- 18 Armistice
- 19 Steep valley
- 21 Gaseous element
- 22 Distort
- 23 Made public
- 24 Disinclined
- 25 Disliked a lot
- 26 Flatbread pouch
- 27 Precursor to reggae
- 28 Goop
- 29 Rorqual
- 31 Beetle genus
- 33 Lend a hand
- 35 Drama
- 36 Sacred song
- 37 Oz’s — City
- 38 Willow rod
- 40 Prima —
- 41 Immense
- 42 Torn piece
- 44 Of utmost importance
- 45 Dolor
- 47 Remotely
- 51 Went swimming
- 52 Retreads
- 53 Homecoming event
- 55 DDE’s nickname
- 56 Musical group
- 57 Circle segments
- 58 Hit the sack (2 wds.)
- 60 Masterless samurai
- 62 Commotion
- 63 “Take My — Away”
- 65 Nuisance
- 66 Mum
- 67 Knight’s title
- 68 Actor — Epps
- 69 Patient’s complaint
- 71 Red Monopoly piece
- 73 Corporate VIP
- 75 In medias —
- 76 Warble
- 77 Damage

- 78 Cleo’s undoing
- 81 Move in ballet
- 83 “American —”
- 84 Preliminary version
- 85 Totality
- 87 Eau —, Wis.
- 90 Appraise
- 92 Flitted
- 94 Paste
- 95 Lariat
- 96 — Creed
- 98 Two of a kind
- 99 Water slide
- 100 Proofs of age
- 101 Directs
- 103 Column order
- 105 Straw hat
- 106 Enclosures for farm animals
- 108 Facilitate
- 109 Territory in northern Canada
- 110 Manuals
- 111 Portable shelter
- 113 Nut for pies
- 114 Ravine
- 115 “Give My — to Broadway”
- 118 Calm
- 119 Edge of an English road
- 120 Swindle
- 124 Come into view
- 125 Glorify
- 126 Prima —
- 127 Boxing great
- 128 Pierce with horns
- 129 “Thinker” sculptor
- 131 Drug
- 133 Snake
- 135 Cash machines
- 136 Rye fungus
- 137 Extremely
- 138 Chaucer character
- 139 Pasture
- 140 Judges
- 141 Winglike parts
- 142 Lugged

DOWN

- 1 Hide for later use
- 2 Three-wheeler
- 3 Rustic
- 4 Expert
- 5 Calendar abbr.
- 6 Salted roe
- 7 “An — of the People”
- 8 Bronte’s Jane —
- 9 Soap pad brand
- 10 Breathe out
- 11 Domain
- 12 Penny — poker
- 13 Foot digit
- 14 Pay-per-view (2 wds.)
- 15 Japanese dog breed
- 16 Indian shrub
- 17 Turf
- 19 Visitor
- 20 Current events show
- 22 Old Greek city-state
- 28 Snooped
- 30 Call out to
- 32 “— Miserables”
- 34 Fuss
- 36 Spread for crackers
- 37 Water brand
- 39 Let it stand
- 40 Earliest
- 42 Maneuver
- 43 Clothing
- 44 Parish priest
- 45 Kitchen items
- 46 Simple math
- 48 Penalty
- 49 Related
- 50 Landlord’s due
- 51 Workplace VIP
- 52 U.S. bonds
- 53 Primp
- 54 Canal in a song
- 57 Having weapons
- 59 Support
- 61 — podrida
- 63 Carried
- 64 Calcify
- 66 Fine violin, for short
- 70 Bill and —

- 72 Western
- 74 — Spunkmeyer cookies
- 76 Mentions
- 79 Show of respect
- 80 Feathers
- 82 Greek Cupid
- 84 Mastermind
- 86 Wanton look
- 87 Bit of feature film
- 88 Put cargo aboard
- 89 Org.
- 91 “God’s Little —”
- 93 Stage area
- 94 Singer — Knight
- 96 — -foot oil
- 97 Teacher
- 99 Frustrate
- 102 Offered as payment
- 104 All right
- 105 “Taras —”
- 107 Looks fixedly
- 109 Shout
- 110 Stretcher on wheels
- 112 Work unit
- 113 Flora
- 114 Mild
- 115 Fit for kings
- 116 Chew the scenery
- 117 Dirty, in a way
- 118 Principle
- 119 Arboreal animal
- 121 Officer-to-be
- 122 Pain relief brand
- 123 Entangled
- 125 Brink
- 126 Watch face
- 130 Mine’s output
- 132 Legume
- 133 Skill
- 134 — volente