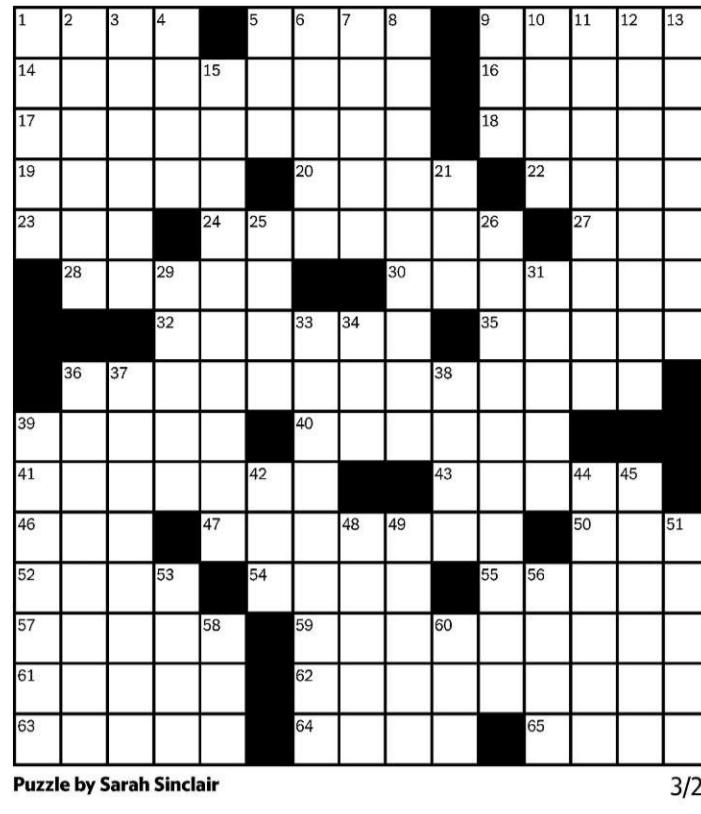


NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

No. 0214

ACROSS

1 No pro
5 Rectitudinous
9 Sleep
14 Clean energy?
16 Alexander, author of the fantasy series "The Chronicles of Prydain"
17 "Everything's fine with me"
18 Bad things to blow
19 Word with "at" or "not in the"
20 Made (out), but barely
22 Parcel
23 D.C. winter hrs.
24 Nice chunk of change
27 Faire
28 Mickey Mantle's retired jersey
30 Classic Gustav Klimt painting made during his "Golden Period"
32 Completely fluid
35 AI
36 Develop emotions (for)
39 "Ragtime" role for which Audra McDonald won a Tony
40 Body of Jewish law
41 Classic ska song with the lyric "Let's get together and feel all right"
43 Affaire de coeur
46 lecithin (chocolate additive)
47 Amazon, e.g.
50 Fútbol stadium cry
52 Romances
54 Lose liquidity, in a way
55 Peak performance
57 Elicit
59 Bewitched
61 "Skimbleshanks: The Railway Cat" poet
62 Second Commandment subject
63 People put down stakes for them
64 Singer who wrote the Oscar-nominated song "May It Be" for "The Fellowship of the Ring"
65 Title that translates to "highest principle"

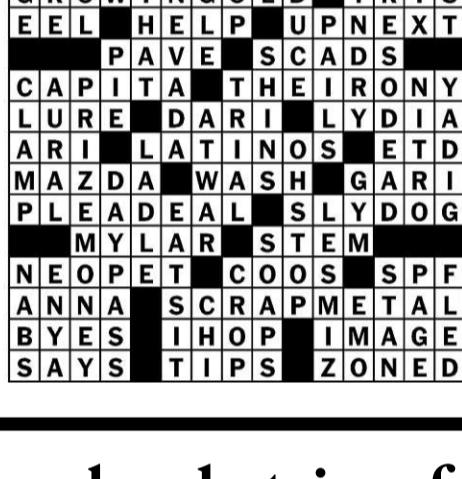


Puzzle by Sarah Sinclair

3/21

DOWN

1 Nimble
2 Unrealistic claim on the packaging of a kid's craft
3 As of yet
4 Promising words
5 Renaissance painter van Eyck
6 Pressed
7 Like a sultry eye shadow look
8 Accepts defeat, in slang
9 1980s TV title character
10 Desirable and profitable, as an assignment
11 Symbol of social status in ancient Mesopotamia
12 They might involve a Snellen chart
13 Google platform for website monetization
15 Protein-packed Purina product
21 "Thanks, Captain Obvious"
25 Move slowly
26 A little unwell?
29 signs
31 Martial art whose name means "sword way"

ANSWER TO THURSDAY'S PUZZLE:**CAROLYN HAX**
Why can't she say what she wants to partner?BY CAROLYN HAX
tellme@washpost.com

Dear Carolyn: I'm a woman in my early 40s who is a few months into a relationship with a man in his mid-30s. We knew each other casually through a mutual interest for roughly a year, and a romantic relationship developed. We spend a lot of time together, laugh a lot and have a lot in common — from interests to values. We enjoy each other's friends and have planned some small trips — including an out-of-state family event that he has invited me to in a couple of months.

So ... everything seems great. And yet, I am really uneasy, and I'm not sure why.

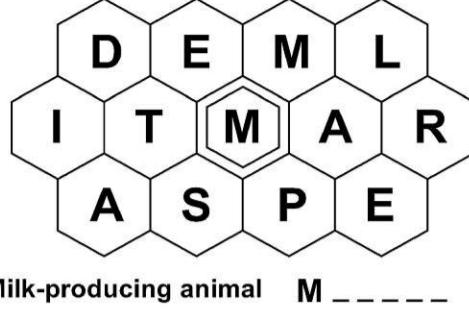
Part of this, I think, stems from my own insecurities, tendency to overthink and fear of abandonment developed through a difficult upbringing and past relationships.

Another part may come from the fact that we don't really talk about our relationship — where it's going, what we want in a partner, etc. I want to have those conversations, but the voice in my head — probably developed from absorbing various movies and magazines in my formative years geared toward what women do

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Start at the double hexagon. Spell solutions to the clues below by winding your way through the grid. You can backtrack to use letters more than once. Each new word starts with the last letter of the previous word.



1. Milk-producing animal M -----

2. Desk lights S -----

3. Primitive weapon M -----

4. Royal domain M -----

5. Contemplated M -----

MAMMAL, LAMPS, SPEAR, REALM, MEDITATED

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And trust yourself to be good enough to have some valid demands.

Then ask your questions.

What's the alternative?

You have your past, and you have your doubts.

Who doesn't? Therapy for flare-ups would be a nice gift to yourself, but even then, it's something in you that you manage — so pretending otherwise is not a viable approach.

Here's an alternative:

Don't ask your questions. Don't attempt to craft the perfect defining-your-relationship-without-scaring-him-off-with-your-readiness conversation opener. Instead, tell him a little about the fear of abandonment itself, and your struggle with it.

Make it clear, of course, that you're not saying,

"You can't ever leave me!!!" Think of it as,

"Welp, here I am (and I feel great, considering.)"

Let the easier topics take you to the harder ones, too. This way, you're not trying to stick the landing on what you see as the single most terrifying routine in your life.

Understand, too, that the worst case isn't messing it up or breaking up — it's being too afraid of these to speak naturally.

UConn's Bueckers leads trio of unanimous AP All-Americans

Field Level Media

Paige Bueckers of UConn, JuJu Watkins of Southern California and UCLA's Lauren Betts earned unanimous Associated Press All-America honors on Wednesday.

Each player received votes on all 31 ballots cast.

Joining them on the first team were Hannah Hidalgo of Notre Dame, who was named on 29 ballots, and Madison Booker of Texas (14).

This is the third selection for Bueckers, who became just the 12th woman to accomplish that feat. She is averaging 19 points, 4.5 rebounds and 4.9 assists.

Bueckers, a senior, has left her mark on the UConn and Big East record books.

She became the first player in Big East history to earn Most Outstanding Player in the conference tournament three times and the fourth to be named Player of the Year three times. Bueckers also reached 2,000 points faster than any player in

the storied history of UConn, accomplishing that in 102 games.

Watkins and Hidalgo became just the third and fourth players in history to be named first-team All-Americans as both freshmen and sophomores, joining Maya Moore of UConn and Courtney Paris of Oklahoma.

Watkins averaged 24.6 points, 6.9 rebounds and 3.5 assists per game, with Hidalgo putting up numbers of 24.2 points, 5.1 rebounds and 3.7 assists.

Betts, a force at both ends of the court, is the first AP first-team All-American in UCLA history. She is averaging 19.6 points and 9.7 rebounds, and has connected on 63.4 percent of her field-goal attempts.

Booker was named Southeastern Conference Player of the Year, a season after winning Big 12 Player of the Year in Texas' last year in that conference. She is averaging 16.2 points, 6.6 rebounds and 2.8 assists.

The second-team All-American honorees are: Aneesah Morrow, LSU;

Ta'Niya Latson, Florida State; Olivia Miles, Notre Dame; Sarah Strong,

UConn; and Georgia Amoore, Kentucky.

The third team consists of: Hailey Van Lith, TCU; Kiki Iriafen, USC; Mikayla Blakes, Vanderbilt; Flau'Jae Johnson, LSU; and Audi Crooks, Iowa State.

Receiving honorable mention honors are: Raegan Beers, Oklahoma; Sonia Citron, Notre Dame; Katie Dinnebier, Drake; Joyce Edwards, South Carolina; Yvonne Ejim, Gonzaga; MiLaysia Fulwiley, South Carolina;

Rori Harmon, Texas; Izzy Higginbottom, Arkansas; Aziyah James, North Carolina State; Lauren Jensen, Creighton; Taylor Jones, Texas; and Chloe Kitts, South Carolina,

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