Ageing Australia – WA State Conference 2026

Australian Institute of Management
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Leading with People, Purpose and Progress

THE TEN QUALITIES AGED CARE NEEDS NOW

Professor Gary Martin FAIM
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Institute of Management WA

WORKING IN AGED CARE CAN BE CHALLENGING

Let me grow old disgracefully

Aussie aged care is safe but dreary — in Europe it's more fun. I know which I'd rather



If you had to choose between a life that was safe but boring, or enjoyable but risky, which would you choose?

That is the key question underpinning aged-care facilities.

The Australian model is broadly based on the former, with a highly risk averse system designed to ensure residents maximise their life span, meet nutritional requirements and don't fall over.

The focus is on risk management, clinical safety standards and the avoidance of lawsuits, but the result is often loneliness, boredom and depression.

Much of Europe, however, has aged-care models that revolve around dignity, independence and social connection. Sometimes th[illegible]

unequivocal in his answer. He has lived in Australia for most of his life, with no desire to ever return to the Netherlands, but has given his wife strict instructions that if he ever needs an aged-care facility, he must return to his birth country.

His complaint was that some Australian facilities were inhumane, claiming some older residents were as bored, depressed and disconnected as animals in a cage.

Residents were handed everything they needed to stay alive, fed and sheltered, but he saw the protection paradox at play, with the measures ultimately serving to isolate and strip them of their autonomy.

While it's true that many carers are drawn to the sector because they are innately caring, some are, sadly, as institutionalised as the residents.

I've heard anecdotes of some staff refusing to allow a resident to keep potted roses by their bedroom window, for fear the thorns could tear their skin. And [illegible]

highlight innovations that can be replicated by others.

The model is of great interest to me as property and urban planning editor, as it shows how our built environment can affect our quality of life.

It is based largely on ensuring old people remain part of a community, particularly through interactions with young people.

In Singapore, public housing developments integrate elder care, child care and communal recreation spaces in a single building in order to maximise casual social connections through the day.

To that end, Monument Hill is being master planned to ensure child care and aged-care centres are close together,



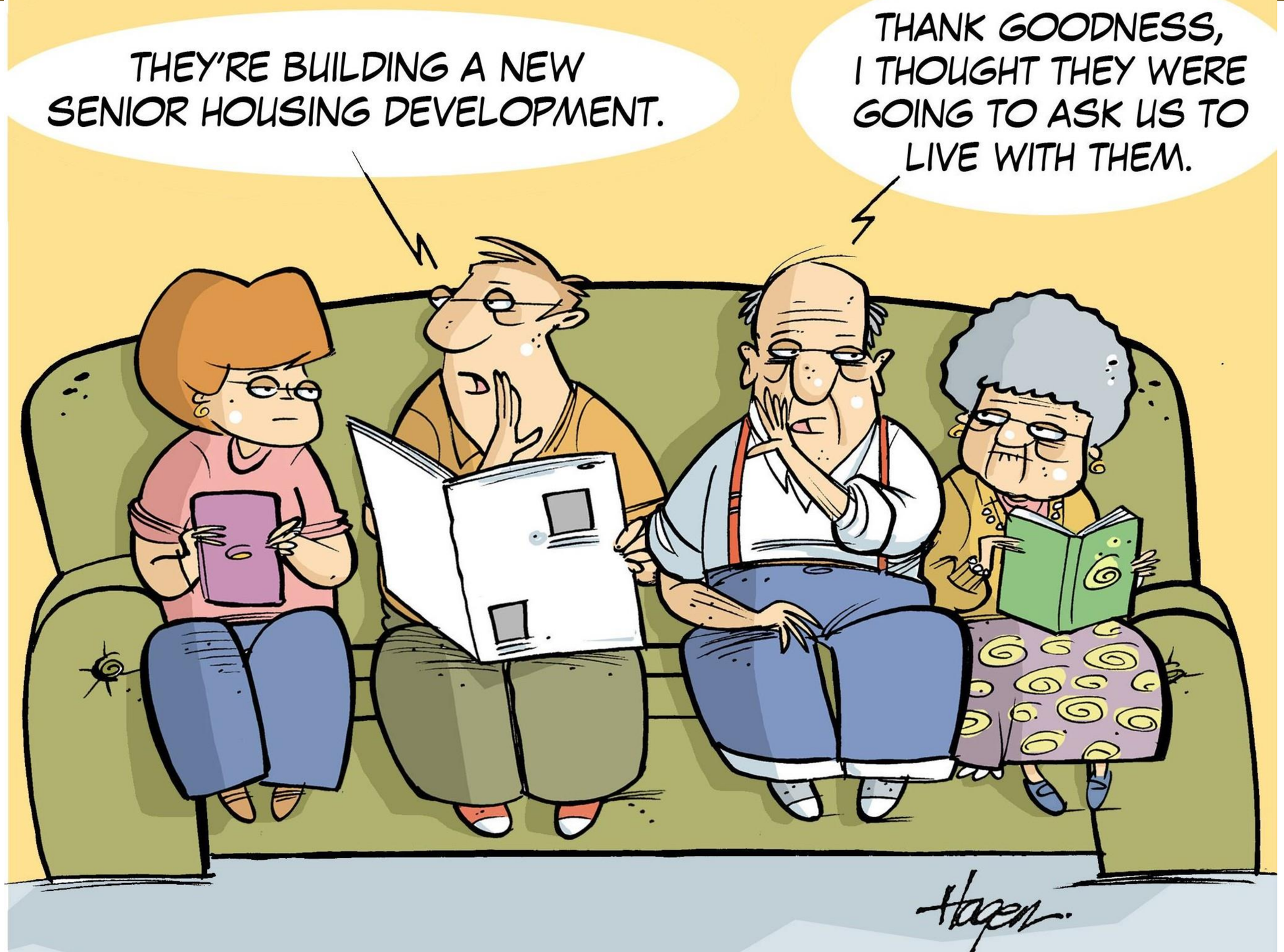
alongside a communal facility such as a library where they can socialise.

Like the famous dementia village, De Hogeweyk in the Netherlands, Monument Hill will have cafes and other amenities open to the general public, so that residents can be part of the broader community that lives around them.

Local facilities are unlikely to adopt the Dutch model in which residents accompany staff to the supermarket to buy food which they all cook together, thanks to Australia's strict nutritional and food preparation requirements. (For the record, they're unlikely to encourage walking in the rain, either.)

But it's worth considering whether a small supermarket at Monument Hill could allow the practice on a smaller scale, perhaps for morning tea.

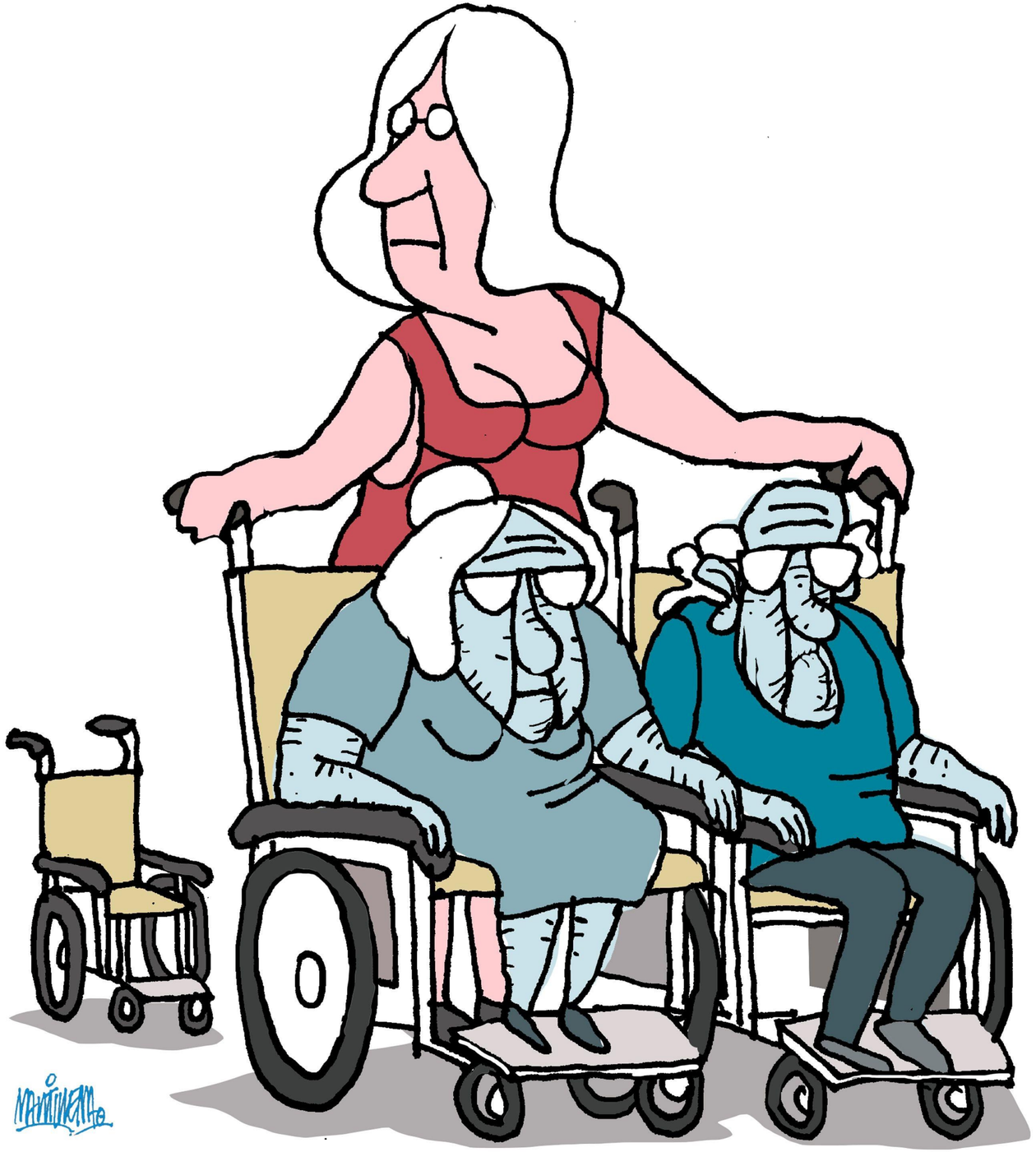
The village will also adopt visual and textural clues to help steer patients through the village, rather than locks and gates. Pink footpaths — much more inviting than black bitumen — may be used to keep them on the right path. A hea[illegible] text[illegible]

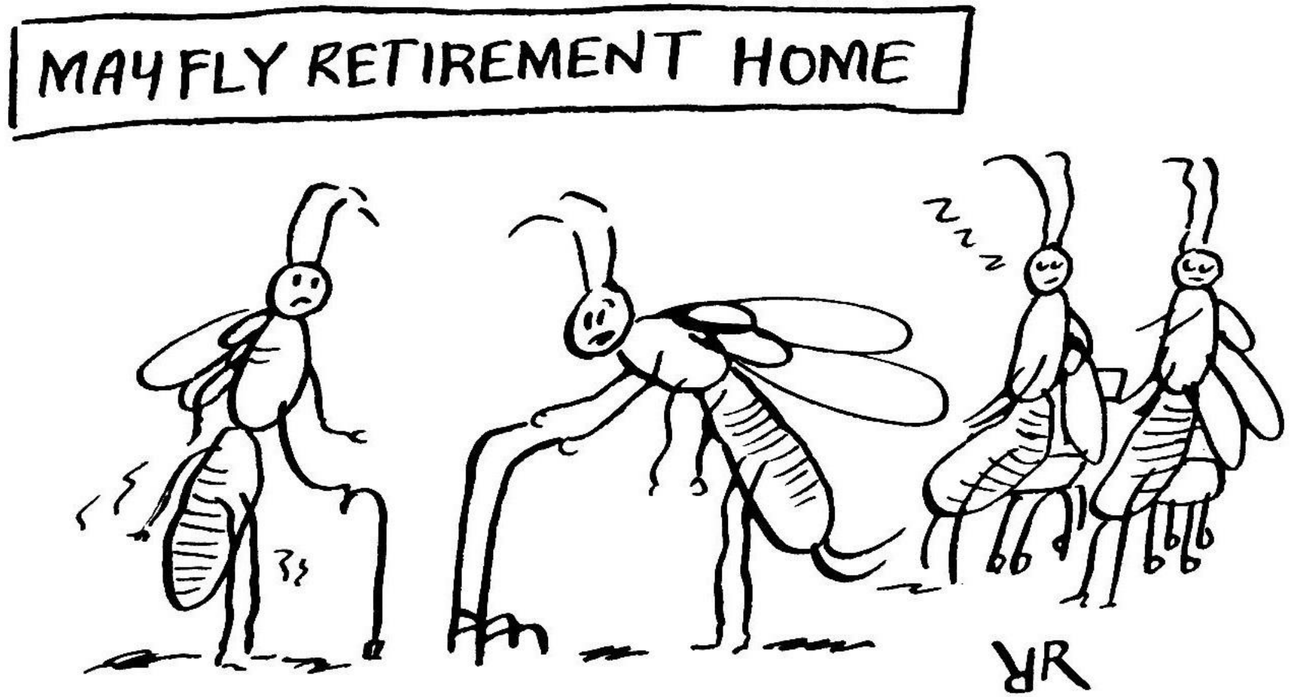

THEY'RE BUILDING A NEW SENIOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.
THANK GOODNESS, I THOUGHT THEY WERE GOING TO ASK US TO LIVE WITH THEM.
Hagen



"Try and stay alive until the government have finished their consultation process."


NO, GRANDMA, WE'RE NOT TRAINED AIDES...
BUT WE'D STILL LOVE TO SERVE YOU!
NEWS
ELDER CARE STAFFING SHORTAGES
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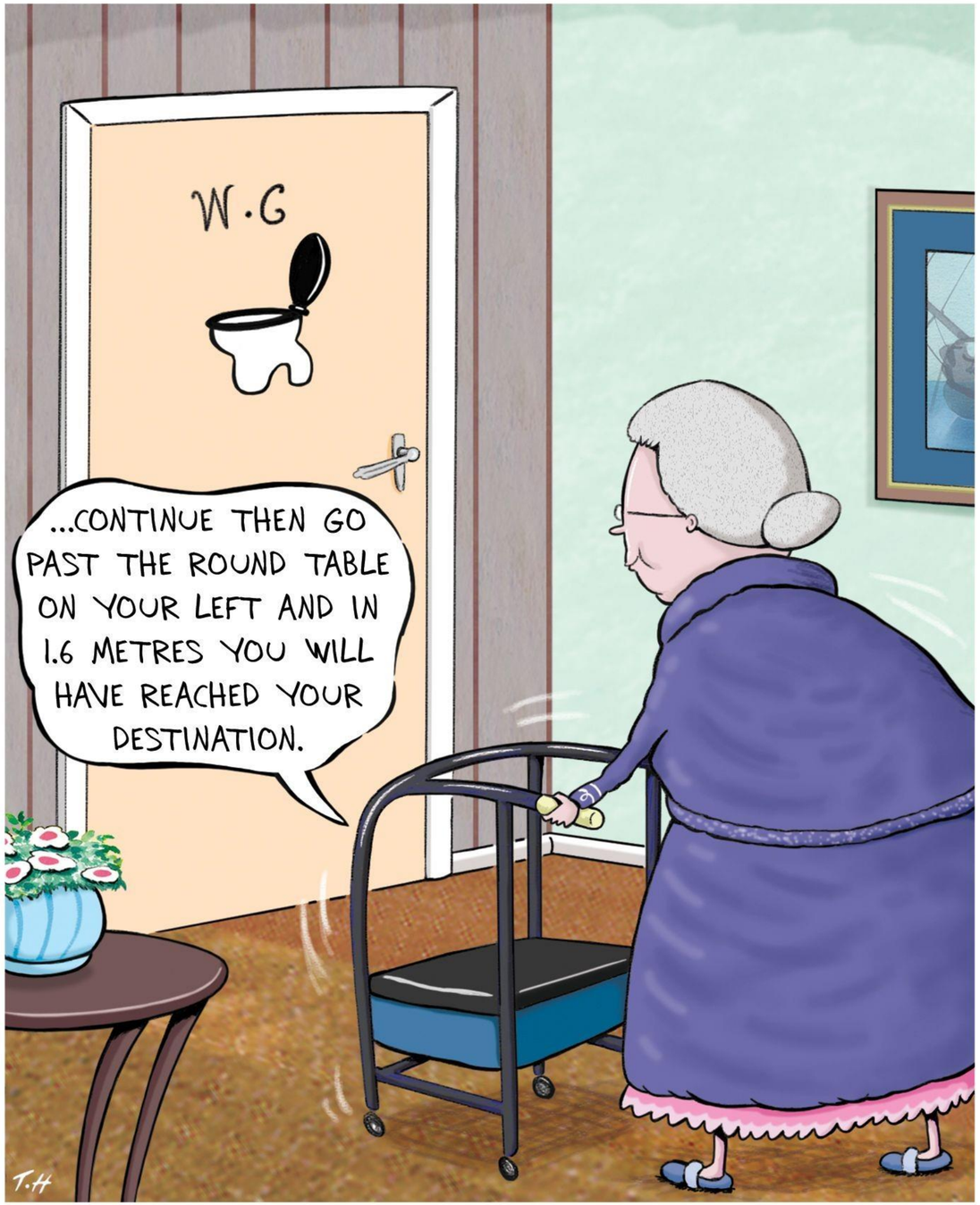




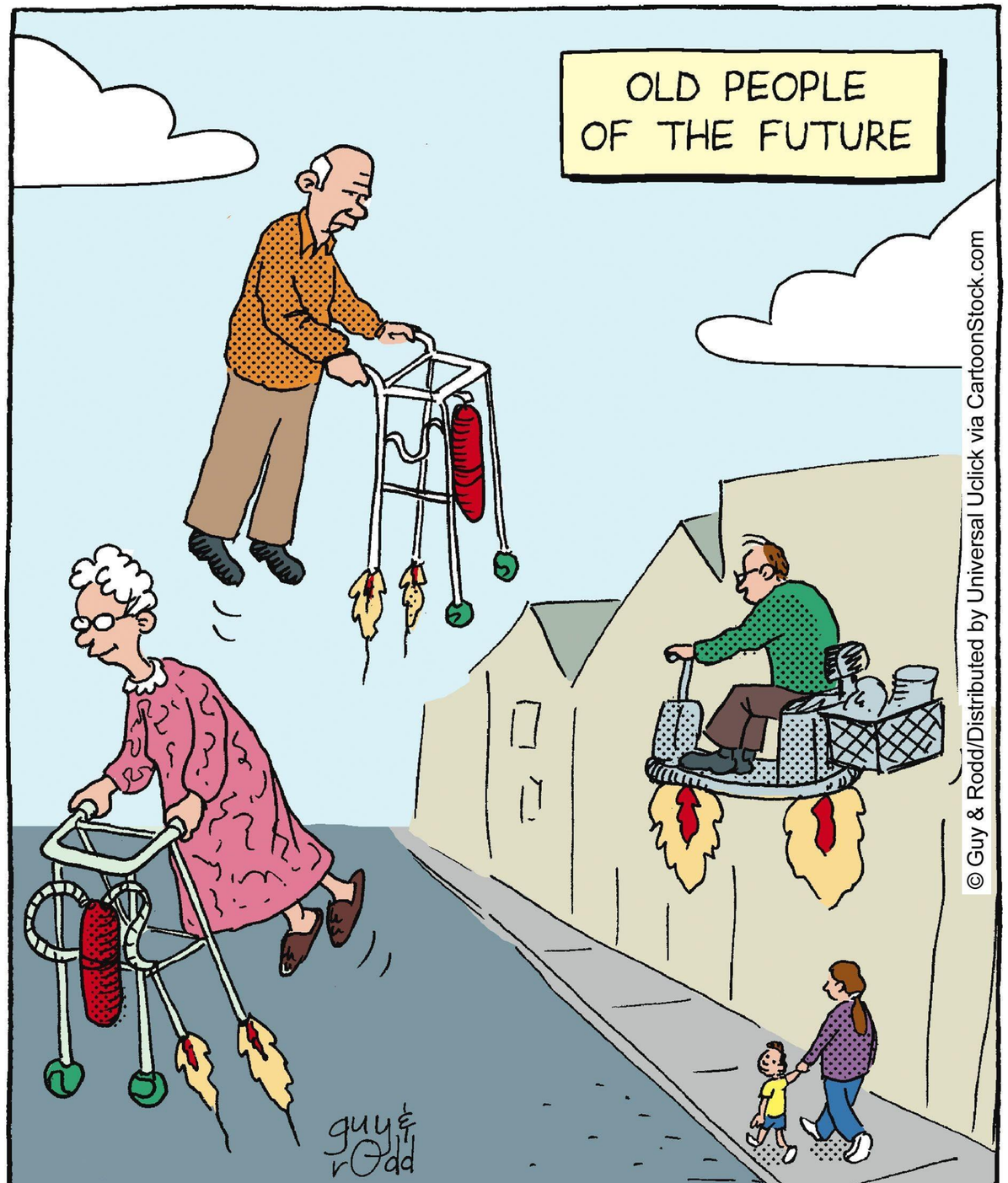
"It's a real worry, so many of us living well into our 25th hour . . ."

BUT THE FUTURE IS LOOKING BRIGHTER


I'm not afraid to be alone, dear. Look, I've got an iDog!
SCHLEY



Smart walker.


OLD PEOPLE
OF THE FUTURE
guy & rOdd
© Guy & Rodd/Distributed by Universal Uclick via CartoonStock.com

THREE LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS

Leading with people

Putting older people, families, carers and the aged care workforce at the centre of our decisions.

This suggests aged care should not be designed around systems alone, but around dignity, relationships, safety, choice, compassion and lived experience.

Leading with purpose

Being clear about why aged care exists:
to support older people to live well, not simply to provide services or meet compliance requirements.

This points to mission, ethics, trust, respect and the deeper social value of caring for people as they age.

Leading with progress

Embrace improvement, innovation and reform.

This could include better workforce models, new technology, stronger governance, improved quality care, more personalized services and willingness to rethink outdated approaches.

What qualities, attributes, capabilities, quotients, or Qs are needed to lead in such a way as to deliver on people, purpose and progress?

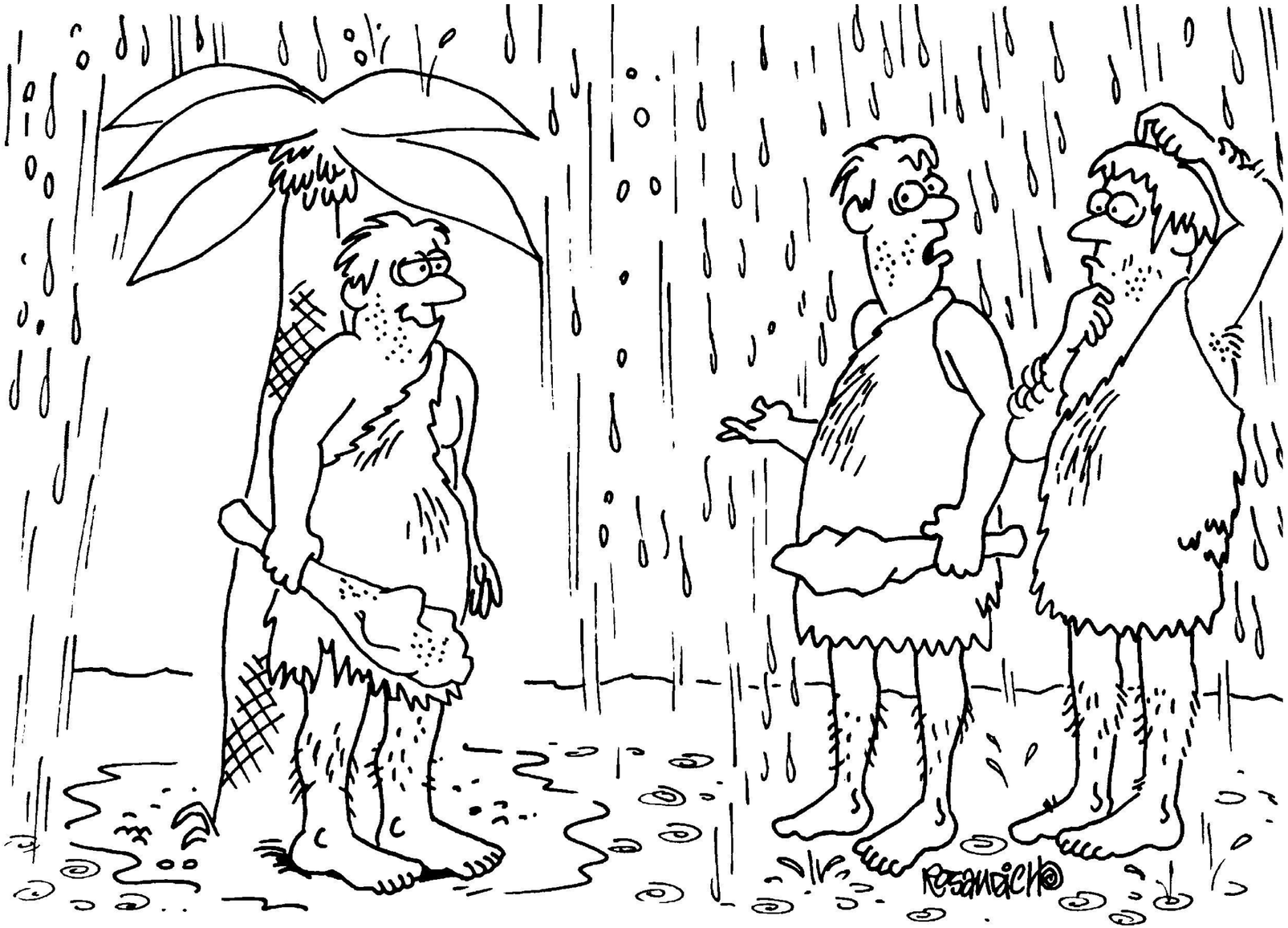
THE TEN Q's

IQ

INTELLECTUAL QUOTIENT



FIRST CAME IQ.....



"I wish I had his I.Q.!"

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IQ OR INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

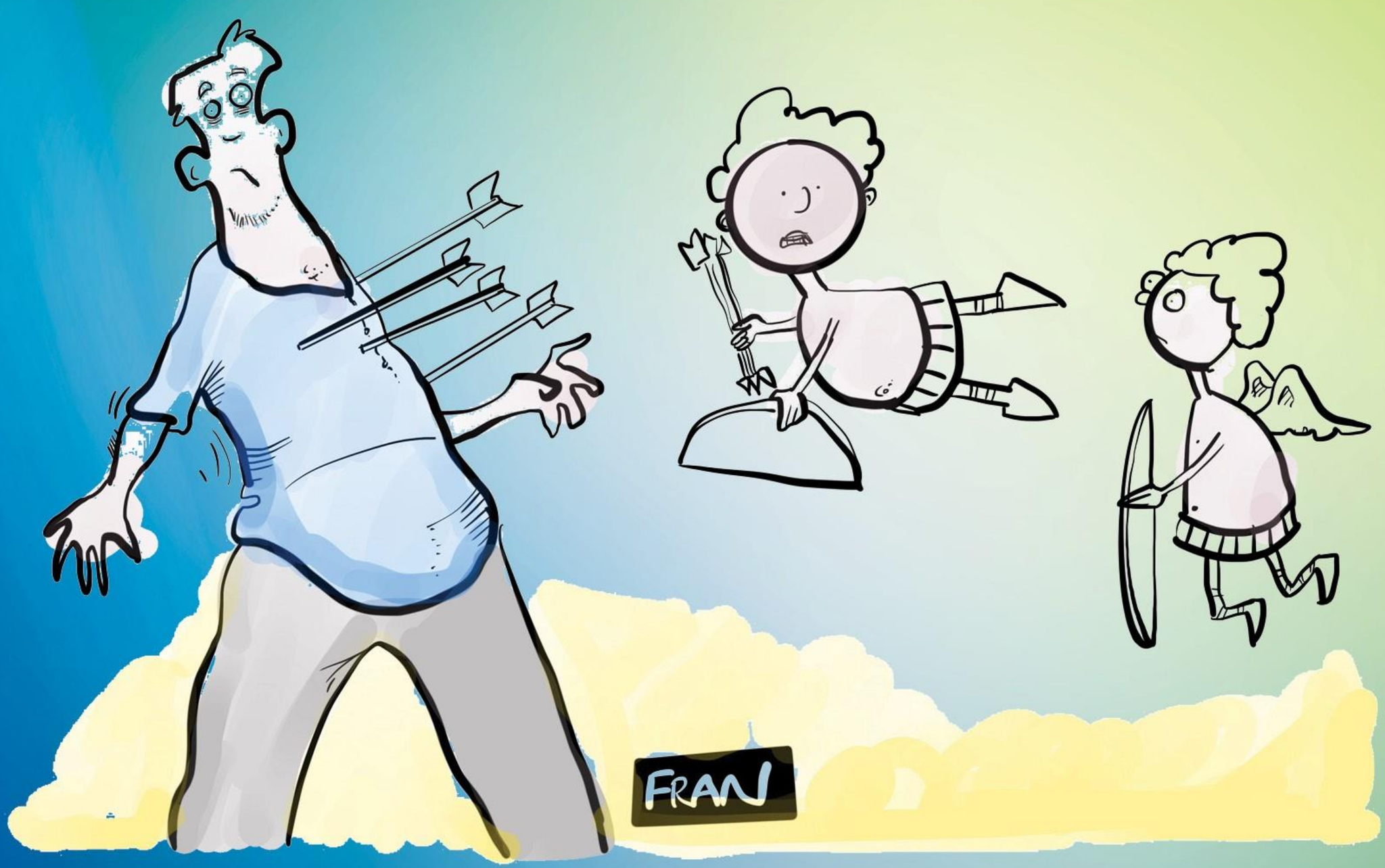
is a standardized measure of cognitive abilities, including reasoning, problem-solving, and comprehension, often used to assess intellectual potential relative to the general population.



THEN CAME EQ.....

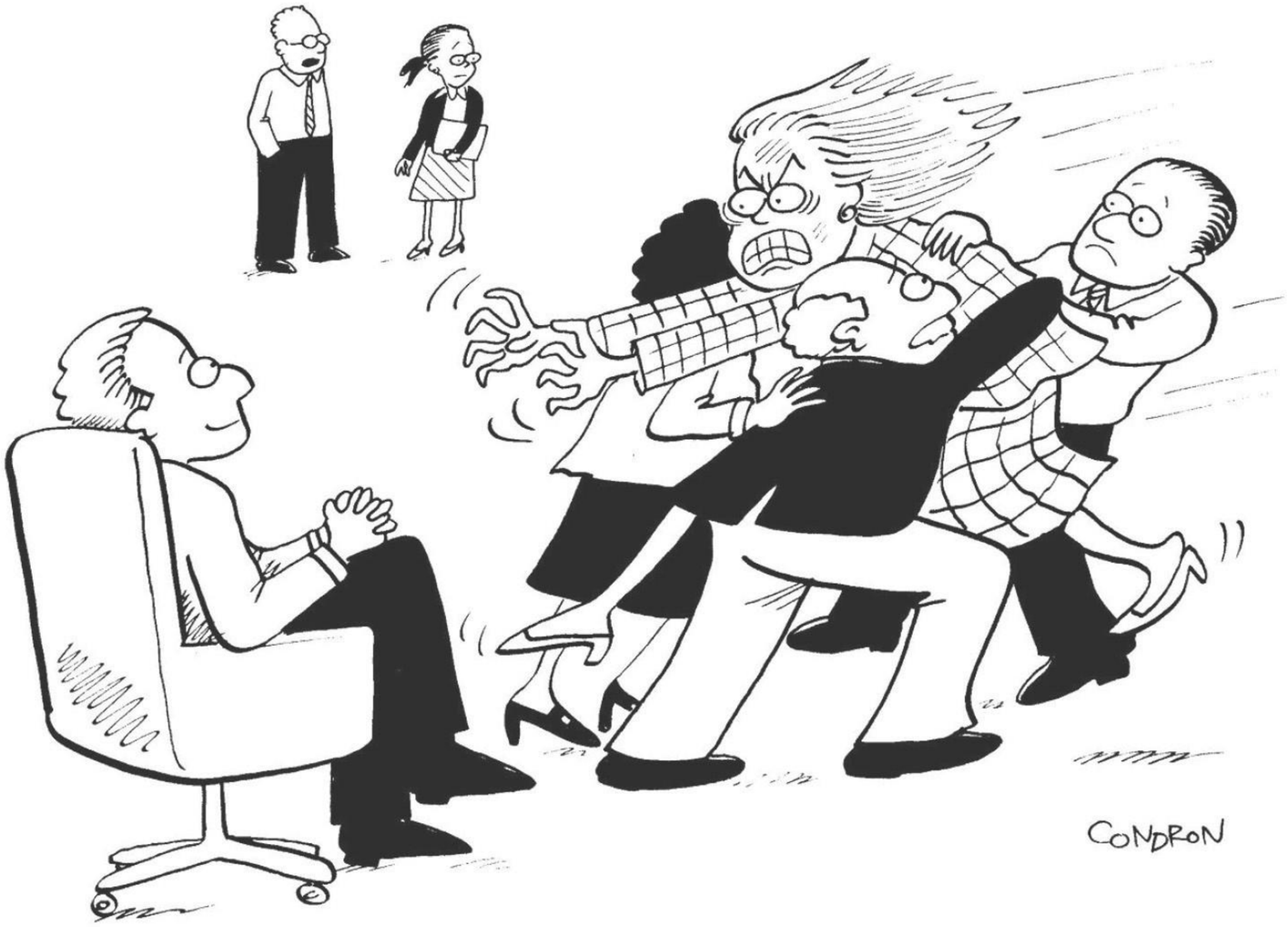
EQ

EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT



He finds it difficult to get in touch with his emotions.

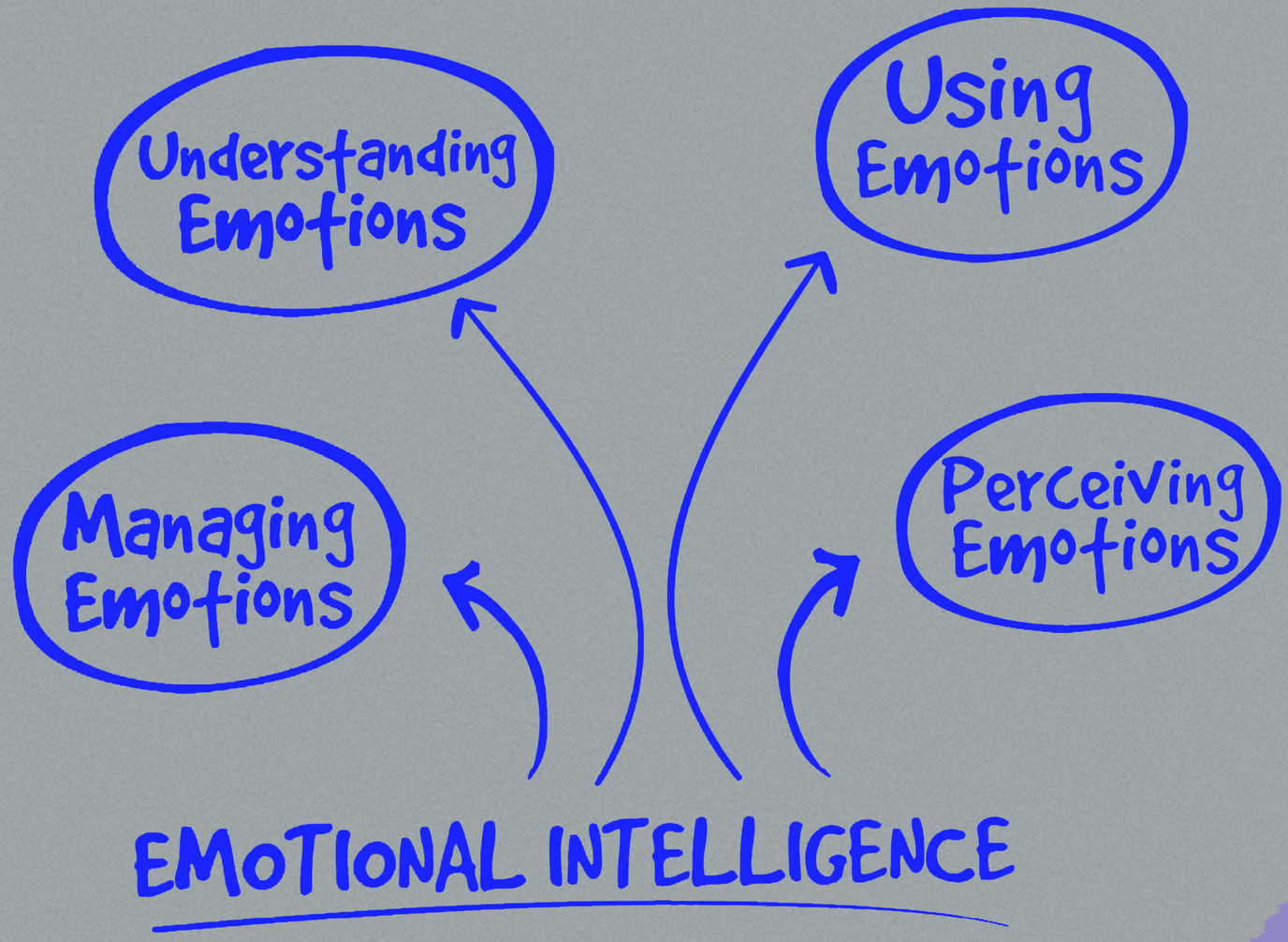
“He’s not good at reading body language”



EQ OR EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT

is the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and influence emotions in oneself and others, playing a crucial role in communication, relationships, and decision-making.

EQ IS THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND MANAGE ONE'S EMOTIONS AT THE SAME TIME AS BEING ABLE TO INFLUENCE THE EMOTIONS OF OTHERS.



AQ

ADAPTABILITY QUOTIENT



"Change of plans. *You* grab the money – *I'll* bury it."

AQ OR ADAPTABILITY QUOTIENT

is the ability to adjust, learn, and thrive in changing environments by embracing uncertainty, overcoming challenges, and continuously developing new skills.

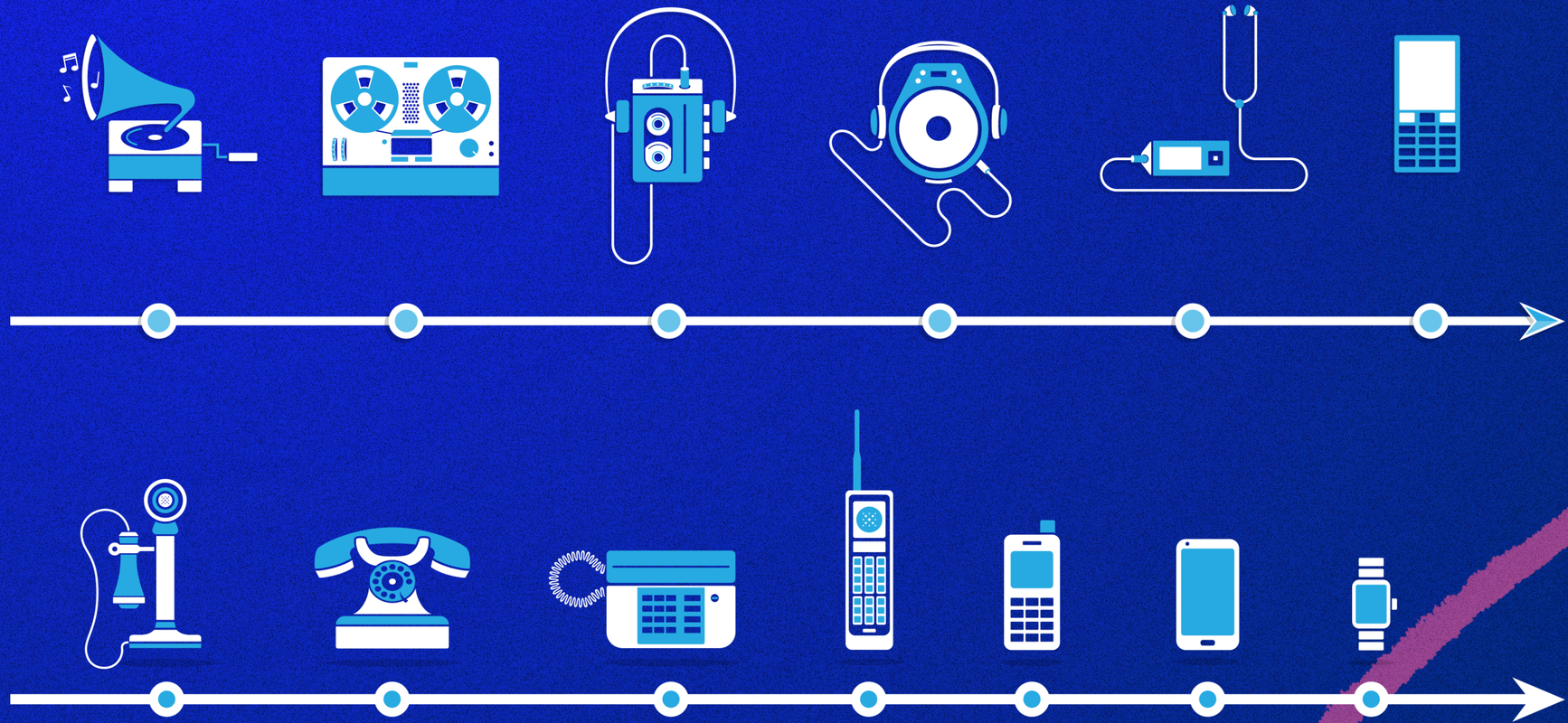


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SQ

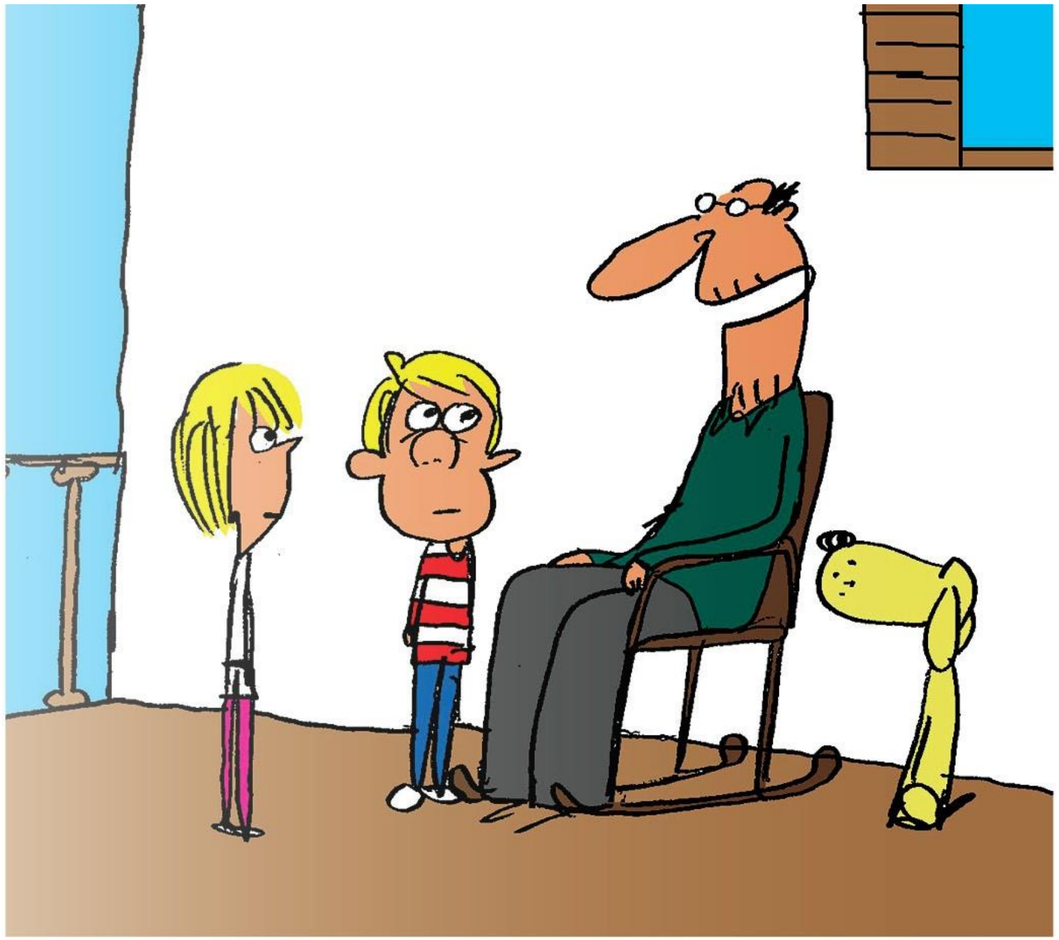
STRATEGIC QUOTIENT

WE MUST LEAD THE EVOLUTION OF OUR ORGANISATIONS OR RISK BEING ARCHITECTS OF DECAY.



SQ OR STRATEGIC QUOTIENT

is the ability to anticipate, plan, and navigate complex challenges by integrating long-term vision, critical thinking, and informed decision-making to achieve sustainable success.



“I was a real visionary. I was a web designer before there was an Internet.”

WQ

WELLBEING QUOTIENT



CartoonStock.com

WQ OR WELLBEING QUOTIENT

is a measure of an individual's ability to maintain physical, mental, and emotional health by managing stress, fostering resilience, and achieving a balanced and fulfilling life.



“My first concern is the well being of my crew”



“If you don’t make time for your wellness you will be forced to make time for your illness.”

(Source unknown)



"Well, Mr. Harris, I'm afraid you simply care too much. You have compassion fatigue."

CQ

CULTURAL QUOTIENT



There's just something about you that makes me think you'd be a PERFECT fit for the job!

CartoonStock.com

CQ OR CULTURAL QUOTIENT

relates to the ability to understand, respect, and engage with people who have different perspectives, experiences, and ways of thinking.

How the in-crowd can leave you out of touch

WORKPLACE MATTERS
GARY MARTIN



MOST of us think when we leave high school we also leave behind the cliques that were so prominent during our secondary education experience.

But we often discover them breeding like rabbits in our workplaces.

It is relatively easy for cliques to form at work and when they do, they have the potential to wreak havoc and create a toxic environment that affects the bottom line.

The rise of cliques, which promote exclusion over inclusion, is a worrying workplace trend that threatens at least a decade's worth of effort to harness the many benefits of diversity.

Diversity involves taking steps to employ people from a wide range of backgrounds who can bring a range of skills and perspectives to the workplace.

Those varying attributes may be based on gender, race, ethnicity, ability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity, and sit alongside socio-economic status, personality and even life experiences.

Yet while we are increasingly attracting diversity to our workplaces to make the statistics look good, we often fail to deliver the inclusion part — the sense of acceptance, belonging and safety for the newcomers.

Inclusion is the primary means through which diverse perspectives are brought to life.

Workplace cliques are characterised by "excessive togetherness", with members bonded by similar attitudes, opinions, backgrounds and interests. Multiple cliques can take hold of a workplace at any one time.

Employees who are "different" and not part of a clique can quickly feel left out, isolated, lonely and treated unfairly.

Those in cliques can make outsiders feel less important and often use their apparent power to squash the views of others.

They rarely socialise outside their group and use exclusion as a weapon against colleagues they dislike.

In some cases, they make those outside the clique feel unsafe through bullying and cyberbullying, as well as gossiping, backstabbing and rumour spreading.

Not surprisingly, workers drawn from diverse backgrounds often hesitate to offer alternative or dissenting views.

Yet it is those diverse views that are an elixir of progress in making a workplace more responsive to the needs of a diverse community. And when it comes to the fear of being ridiculed or intimidated, they will hide their religious views or sexual orientation and avoid sharing their hobbies.

Others will become so disillusioned with their roles and upset at the exclusion that they will seek a job elsewhere.

The rise of cliques in any workplace is a serious symptom of a failed diversity and inclusion strategy. If left unchecked, cliques can destroy the personality of a workplace and lead to poor morale and low productivity.

Most alarmingly, cliques can render an organisation less effective in responding to the needs of a diverse community.

Still unconvinced? Many experts interchange "clique" with the words "pack", "band", "mob", "ring" and even "gang" – all of which reek of exclusivity and perhaps unethical behaviour.

Professor Gary Martin is chief executive at the Australian Institute of Management WA

GQ

GENERATIONAL QUOTIENT

Ending intergenerational warfare in workplace

WORKPLACE MATTERS
GARY MARTIN



There is a growing obsession in our workplaces to define people by their age and pit one generation against another.

Once referred to as a generational divide, this fixation is increasingly commonly labelled intergenerational warfare as tension escalates between different age cohorts.

We snipe at baby boomers, who were born between 1945 and 1964, for being change-averse, ignorant and the least tech savvy of all generations.

Generation X members, who arrived between 1965 and 1981, are attacked for their apparent dislike of being told what to do and their sceptical outlook on life. And millennials, or the generation Y-ers who were born between 1982 and 1994, are dubbed the "Me Me Me" generation for their disruptive behaviour and sense of entitlement.

But as the gap between generations has widened, we have also become acutely aware that generational boundaries are unreliable guides to traits or behaviours.

It has pushed an increasing number to break free of their generational category and the associated stereotypes.

Those who have managed to escape have joined a rapidly blooming and ageless generation dubbed "the perennials".

Just like their counterparts in the plant world, they are a robust variety.

Perennials are an inclusive, relevant, passionate, compassionate, creative and confident generation who live in the present, remain aware of what is happening around them and keep abreast of the latest in technology.

They cut across stereotypes and refuse to let their age dictate their interests, preferences, social behaviour and those who they associate with.

Anyone can become a perennial — it all comes down to attitude.

The birth of the perennials movement is a call for leaders across government, corporations, not-for-profits and charitable groups to end the generational warfare that has plagued our workplaces and community and resulted in unproductive tribalism.

Allocating an individual to a particular generational cohort assumes a person born before a certain point cannot make valuable contributions.

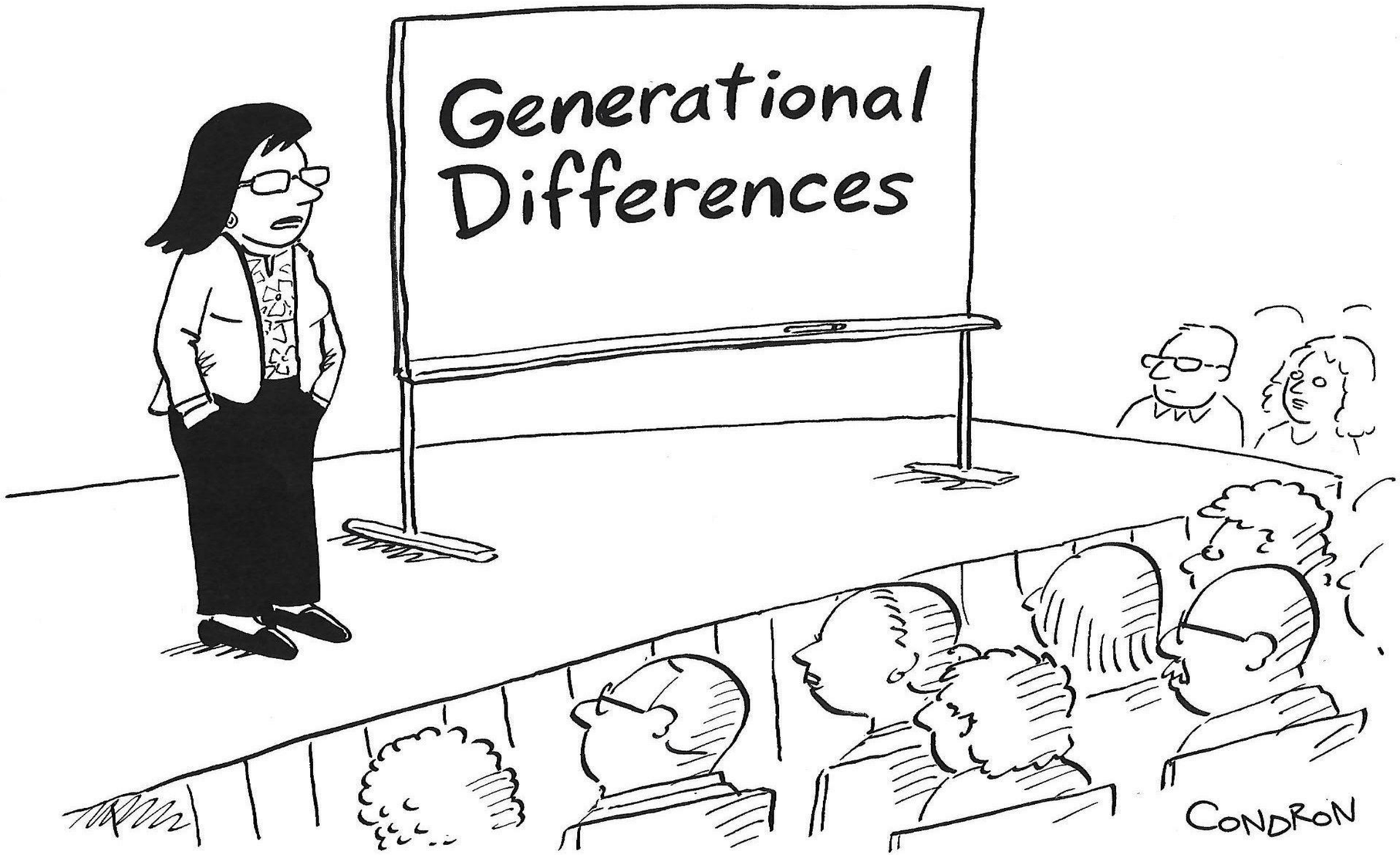
It assigns unfair "best before" dates to those who hit midlife and forces many to internalise labels that limit themselves and their potential.

Yet every day we hear countless stories about vibrant people achieving success despite their age — because they have adopted a perennial-styled mindset. It is time for leaders of all ages to end our intergenerational warfare and become inclusive — not divisive — and acutely aware of the unconscious biases and stereotypes that we have assigned to different generations.

In an era of recovery from a pandemic that has wreaked havoc on our community, we need leaders to bring together generational cohorts to allow us to grow, learn and discover with a view towards being the best we possibly can.

And the next time you hear one generation being pitted against another, take the opportunity to give power to the perennials movement by disclosing your allegiance to this non-age specific, colourful and ever-flowering grouping of human beings.

Professor Gary Martin is chief executive at the Australian Institute of Management WA



"THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS TRAINING IS TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER AND WHY OUR YOUNGER EMPLOYEES ARE SO LAZY AND ENTITLED."


YOU HOLD THE TOP BIT UP TO YOUR FACE, PUT THIS FINGER IN THE SPINNING WHEEL AND KEEP TURNING IT UNTIL YOU HEAR SOMEONE TALKING
ONLY OLD PEOPLE KNOW HOW IT WORKS



“I had to hire younger employees to keep up with today’s technology and social media.”

GQ OR GENERATIONAL QUOTIENT

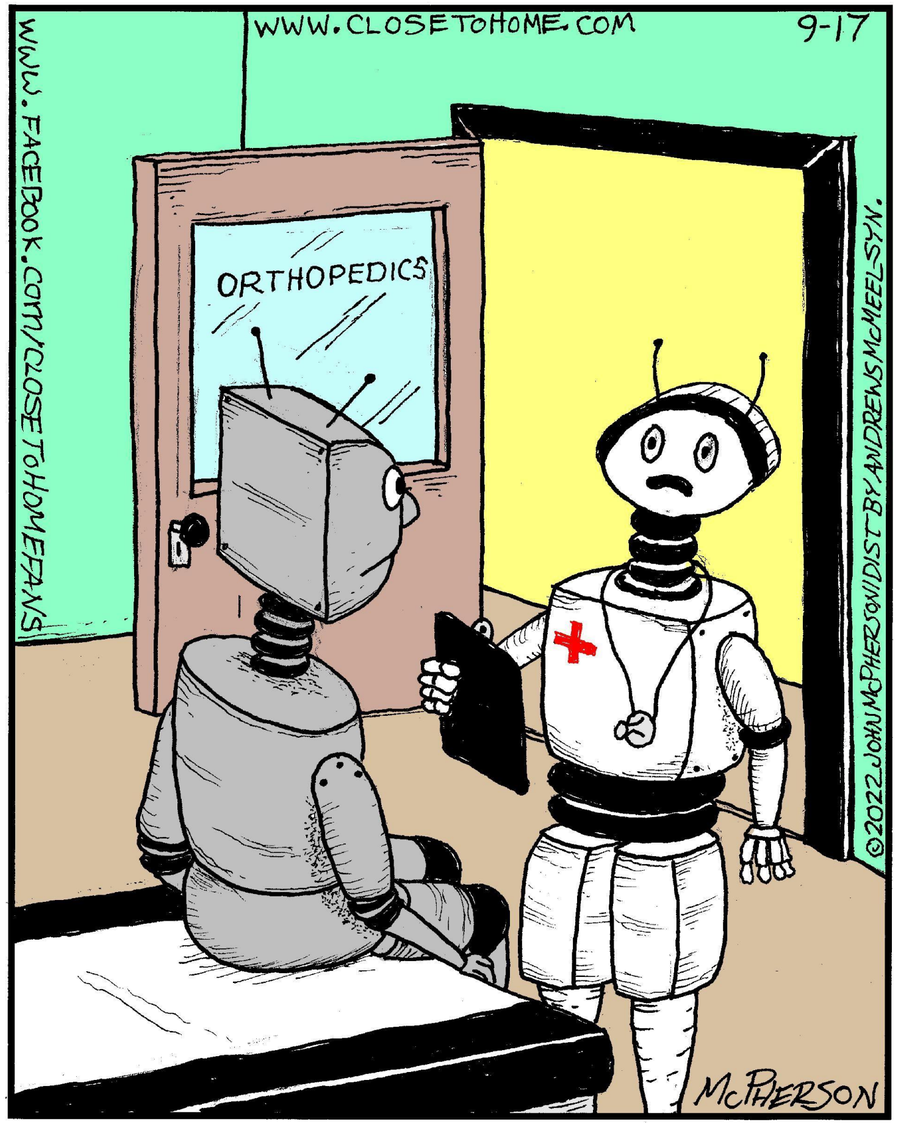
refers to the ability to understand, navigate, and effectively engage with people from different generations.

It involves recognizing and appreciating generational differences in values, communication styles, work ethics, and expectations while fostering collaboration and minimizing conflict.


LIBRARY
HOW TO GET ONLINE
HOW TO READ A BOOK

DQ

DIGITAL INTELLIGENCE



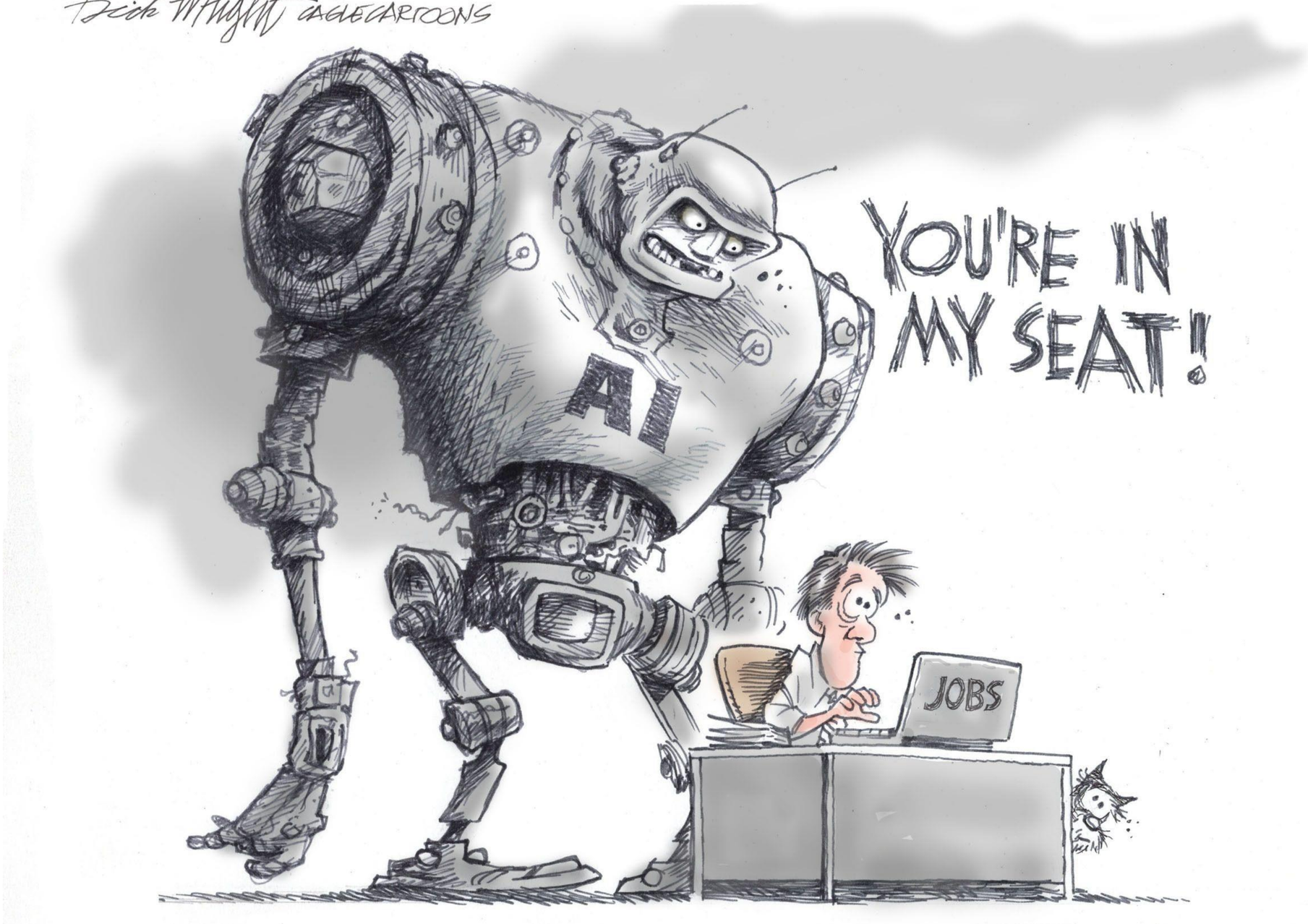
"The test results are in, and I'm afraid you have a floppy disk."

CartoonStock.com



“You may want to look into getting a better cybersecurity system. I don’t think that sign will be enough.”

CartoonStock.com


Dick Wright EAGLECARTOONS
AI
YOU'RE IN MY SEAT!
JOBS

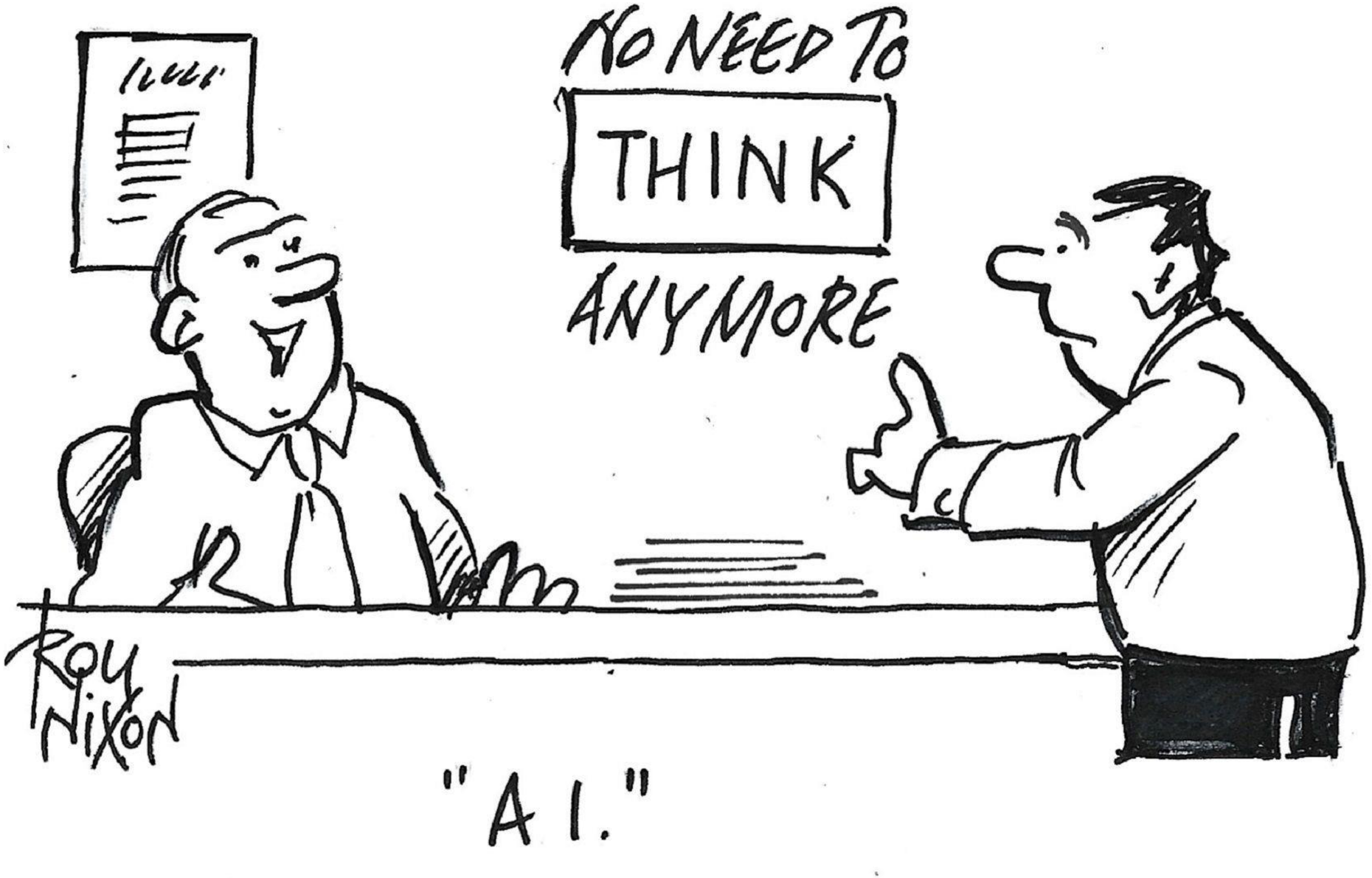
DQ OR DIGITAL INTELLIGENCE

refers to the ability to understand, adapt to, and effectively use digital technologies, including AI, data, cybersecurity, and emerging innovations.

It encompasses both technical skills and the mindset needed to navigate a tech-driven world responsibly.



When working online Jane was careful to stop and drain any AI slop that accumulated.



"A I."

MQ

MORAL QUOTIENT



"On the one hand, we'll burn in hell; on the other, that's a lot of money."

Four years jail for bank invoice plot

STEVE ZEMEK

A high-ranking bank employee who was lavished with millions of dollars worth of extravagant



$100K J

It's not a bad starting sa

'Port rorts' case pushes back to May

SHA[illegible]ON HAMPTON



MQ OR MORAL QUOTIENT

refers to the capacity to distinguish right from wrong and act according to ethical principles, even in complex or challenging situations.

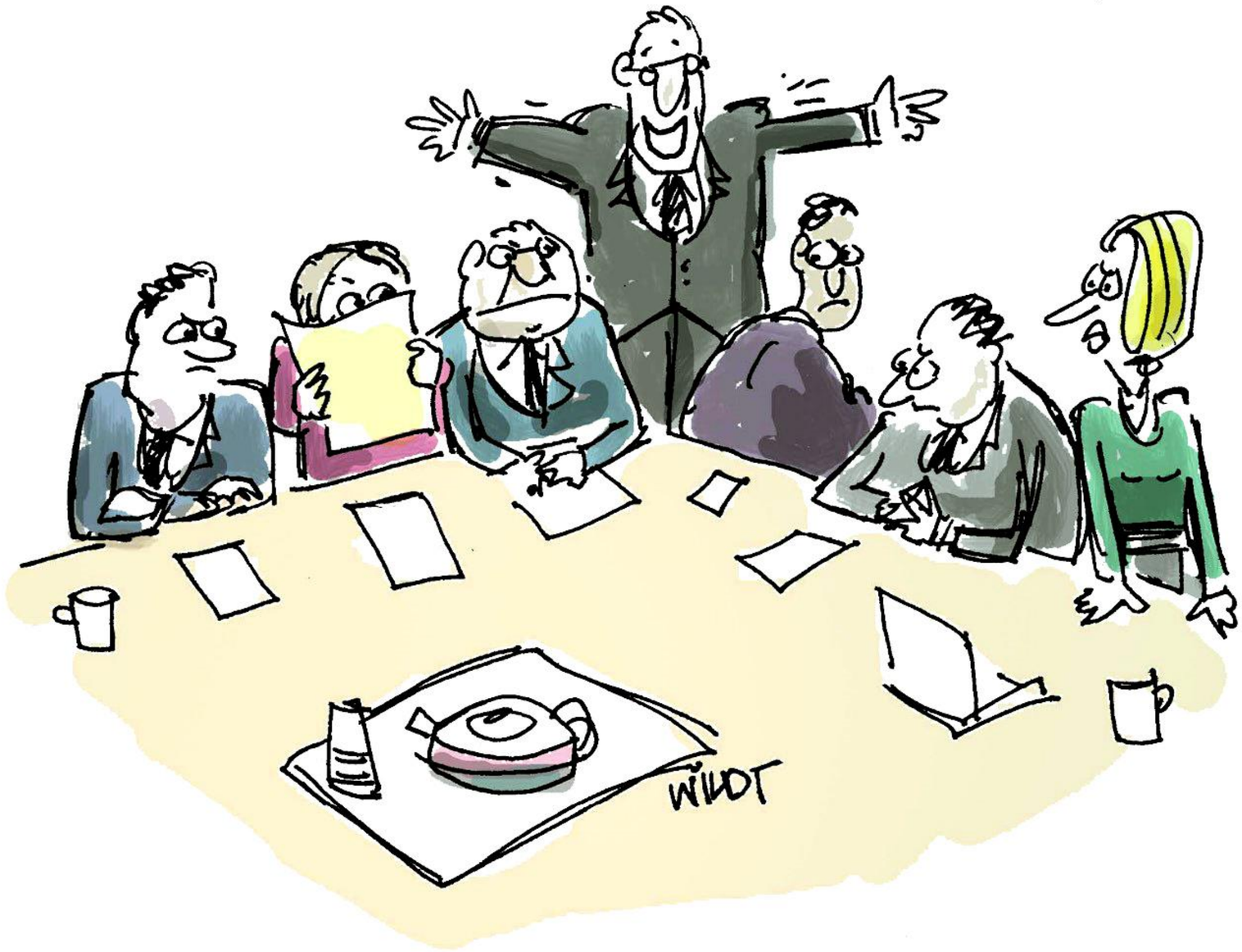
It encompasses integrity, responsibility, compassion, and the ability to make moral decisions based on values rather than self-interest or external pressure.



"Remember, when in doubt,
follow your inner GPS."

TQ

TRUST QUOTIENT



"Finally we have something in common...mutual distrust."

TQ OR TRUST QUOTIENT

refers to an individual’s ability to build, maintain, and inspire trust in relationships, whether personal, professional, or societal.

It reflects how dependable, credible, and ethical someone is perceived to be by others.



"HE'S A DRUNK-WITH-POWER DRUNK ... THE WORST KIND!"

IQ
EQ
AQ
SQ
WQ
CQ
GQ
DQ
MQ
TQ

TIME FOR A LEADERSHIP Q-AUDIT

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

THANK YOU