

with "Well, what do you expect on my food budget?" or "Maybe I could cook better if I had a new stove like everybody else." This insults John's pride, so he attacks with "Now, Joan, it's not lack of money; it's simply that you don't know how to manage."

And away they go! Before a truce is finally declared, all sorts of accusations are made by each party. In-laws, sex, money, premarital and postmarital promises, and other issues will be introduced. Both parties leave the battle nervous, tense. Nothing has been settled, and both parties have new ammunition to make the next quarrel more vicious. Little things, petty thinking, causes arguments. So, to eliminate quarrels, eliminate petty thinking.

Here's a technique that works: before complaining or accusing or reprimanding someone or launching a counterattack in self-defense, ask yourself, "Is it really important?" In most cases, it isn't and you avoid conflict.

Ask yourself, "Is it really important if he (or she) is messy with cigarettes or forgets to put the cap on the toothpaste or is late coming home?"

"Is it really important if he (or she) squandered a little money or invited some people in I don't like?"

When you feel like taking negative action, ask yourself, "Is it really important?" That question works magic in building a finer home situation. It works at the office, too. It works in home-going traffic when another driver cuts in ahead of you. It works in any situation in life that is apt to produce quarrels.

3. JOHN GOT THE SMALLEST OFFICE AND FIZZLED OUT

Several years ago, I observed small thinking about an office assignment destroy a young fellow's chances for a profitable career in advertising.