

Conversation with the Mayor - January 9, 2012
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It's the Little Thin

Have you ever noticed that often it is the little things that can really get to you? One of the signs of maturity, which can come at any age – or not, is the ability to deal with situations as they come up. So it is a shock to the system when what should be a minor event/problem/change in schedule gets to an otherwise mature adult. It happens; I am sure, to everyone at one time or another. And when it does those nearest and dearest to us are often taken aback and suffer the unexpected fallout. What to do?

Take it in stride – easy to say. Over the years I have tried to develop an attitude that 'this too shall pass'. A strategy adopted a long time ago and still used today is 'put it in a box', There are simply some things over which you have no control so why beat yourself up about them? Put the situation 'in a box', file it in a dark corner of your consciousness and deal with it when you can see a workable solution or forget it. Then there is 'his/her shoes must pinch', recognizing that other people have bad days also and you may just be in the wrong place at the wrong time and have the unfortunate opportunity to be nearby when that one little thing sets them off. The final straw usually has nothing to do with you personally; you just got unlucky.

There is something positive and proactive that we can all do to lessen the number of last straws that break the backs of family and friends' camels. Pay more attention to the little shortcuts we take that make life difficult for others.

There are many, many of them. Some are simple courtesies – waiting in line without complaining loudly, not sharing your cell phone call with the world; say please and thank you. Others are the rules we are expected to live by. Some examples could include: put trash in trash receptacles rather than dropping it in the street or on the sidewalk for someone else to pick up; read and obey the no parking signs and the handicap designations; stop for pedestrians in cross walks and don't park in crosswalks; pick up after your dog on village streets, in the parks, or in the cemeteries, and on and on and on.

The Golden Rule comes to mind here. If we were all to use that as a guideline there would be many fewer boxes stuffed in dark corners and everyone could have no pain – zero pain.