

Teaching Kids Consideration!

Marla Letter No. 54, 6/86



1. **ONE THING THAT KIDS DO ALL THE TIME IS ARGUE AMONGST THEMSELVES.** A lot of the time it is more just contradicting what the other one said, almost for the sake of contradiction, or just to show that they're superior. A lot of times it's that they think they're right & just to show that the other is wrong & make themselves look better. Kids do it all the time, practically constantly. Our kids here are amazing that they don't do it more, but I know they too, do their share of bickering.

2. **SO THEY NEED TO SOMEHOW BE SHOWN THAT THIS IS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.** This is putting yourself up as better than others & better than the one that you're putting down by contradicting them & by telling them, "No, that's not right."

3. **NOW MAYBE THEY ARE RIGHT SOMETIMES, MAYBE THEIR POINT OF VIEW IS RIGHT, USUALLY THEY THINK THEY ARE RIGHT, IF THEY'RE ARGUING.** If they're contradicting, they usually think they are right. But the point is, whether they're right or wrong, they need to learn it's wrong to argue! A big principle that you need to try to teach the teens, as well as one which all of us need to learn, is to put ourselves in other people's shoes.

4. **YOU NEED TO SAY TO THE TEENS, "LOOK, IF YOU STAND UP HERE IN CLASS & YOU GIVE AN ANSWER TO A QUESTION & IF I SAY TO YOU, 'NOW, THAT'S WRONG! HOW COULD YOU BE SO STUPID?'--The way you would feel if I said that to you is exactly the way your little sister or the child you are caring for or your friend is going to feel when you unlovingly contradict him or her." But kids talk to each other this way all the time. "How would you feel? What would it make you feel like?"**

5. **YOU COULD SAY, "JUST AS AN EXPERIMENT, WE'RE GOING TO WAIT UNTIL SOMEBODY GIVES A WRONG ANSWER IN CLASS & THEN WE'RE**

GOING TO SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS. You really need to see what it feels like." Or maybe you could get someone to volunteer in that particular discussion, unbeknownst to the others, to give an incorrect answer when you ask him a question. Then you can answer him in an unloving way, the way kids & even adults sometimes do, & ask him how it makes him feel.--And then discuss it with the others.

6. **GIVE THEM AN ILLUSTRATED SAMPLE OR SOMEHOW DRIVE IT HOME TO THEM HOW IT MAKES PEOPLE FEEL, BECAUSE THEY NEED TO REALISE THAT.** I think if kids understood more about what they were doing to others when they do it, they'd be more careful, especially our kids that love the Lord. But they just don't think.

7. **EXPLAIN, "WHEN YOU DO THIS, YOU'RE TRYING TO PUT YOURSELF UP & THE OTHER PERSON DOWN & IT MAKES THEM FEEL LIKE CRAWLING UNDER THE RUG.** When you do it to your younger brothers & sisters who already think they're not as good as you because you're the oldest & you know the most, & you put them down by contradicting & arguing with them all the time, think how terrible it makes them feel! Of course they don't know as much as you & of course they're going to make a lot of mistakes & say a lot of things that are wrong & that you know better about. But how does that make them feel? They're going to feel like never saying anything. They're going to feel like they can't do anything right or can't learn anything. It just makes them feel real bad & like you don't love them or care about them."

8. **WE ADULTS NEED TO REALISE THIS OURSELVES, & WE NEED TO REALLY TRY TO MAKE THE KIDS SEE THAT THIS IS A PART OF LOVE,** that this is one way in which the Lord wants us to show Love to others. This is a big way kids can show Love to their peers & to

their younger brothers & sisters & the younger people they take care of.

9. **I KNOW OUR KIDS DO IT SOME, BECAUSE VERY OFTEN IN PRIVATE I HEAR DAVID CONTRADICTING TECHI, NOT IN A MEAN WAY, BUT HE DOES CONTRADICT HER.** But when they're with us, more often than not he just sort of smiles & says nothing because I think he feels that he doesn't have to take the responsibility to correct her when he is with us. He knows that if she is saying something wrong, we'll correct her if we feel she should be corrected. But when she & David are alone he feels he is sort of responsible to tell her she's wrong. He doesn't do it in an ugly way. He just says, "No, that's not right. It's this way." But he's not mean about it. And even the other children do remarkably well along this line, because even though they do contradict each other sometimes, maybe we would say they do it a lot, but compared to most kids, they're really sweet & they're really good to each other & they try to make it easy for each other to be good.

10. **BUT WITH MOST KIDS IT IS JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS THAT IS A TERRIBLE HABIT.** (Sara: The teen girls really bickered between themselves when they first came. The second you turned your back & even sometimes right in front of the adult they'd do it, because I guess they thought they were showing responsibility & maturity & righteousness & all. But they had no qualms about belittling & arguing amongst themselves & we had several Pow-Wows about that.)

11. **LEARNING TO GIVE THE OTHER PERSON THE ADVANTAGE & THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT & BUILD THEM UP UNSELFISHLY INSTEAD OF TEARING THEM DOWN SELFISHLY IS ONE WAY THEY CAN BE TAUGHT TO SHOW THEIR LOVE.** There are a lot of loving deeds children are unable to do for others because they're so young, like cook a meal by themselves or nurse a sick loved one. But one way they can certainly show their love & their consideration for others & their help for others is by lifting them up instead of putting them down.

12. **NOW I CAN UNDERSTAND HOW OLDER BROTHERS & SISTERS FEEL THAT THEY HAVE TO CORRECT THE YOUNGER ONES.** If they say cows are blue, the older child feels obligated to correct the younger as part of his brotherly or sisterly duty, besides the fact that it does, of course, make the older one feel superior. But they can learn to do it gently & lovingly. They can learn the distinction between when they need to do it & when they

don't need to do it, when it's necessary to really teach them something & set them straight on some fact, & when they don't need to.

13. **NUMBER ONE, THEY CAN LEARN THAT DISTINCTION. NUMBER TWO, WHEN THEY DO HAVE TO CORRECT SOMEBODY, IN OTHER WORDS, CONTRADICT THEM, THEY CAN LEARN HOW TO DO IT IN A NICE WAY.** We have tried to teach our children that. Like Techi should say, "Mary Dear, I think you're mistaken. Cows are usually black or brown or white, not blue."--Or "I thought that, too, when I was little, but I learned that cows are black or brown or white, not blue." Or, "let's go look in your book at cows & see what colours they usually are." On the other hand, maybe it's not really necessary to correct a 3-year-old's misconception of the colour of cows.--She'll learn soon enough by seeing them in her books or in real life. But if you do correct someone, always try to do it in a sweet, loving way. Kids don't mind being corrected or even contradicted if it's done nicely, but most children contradict each other in such a vindictive sort of a scornful or sarcastic way, with an, "Oh, that's not right! You don't know anything!" kind of attitude.

14. **BUT WE SHOULD HAVE FAMILY YOUNG PEOPLE THAT ARE DIFFERENT THAN THE WORLD'S YOUNG PEOPLE, BECAUSE THEY HAVE LOVE.** This is a result of having Love, that instead of tearing people down, you are able to lift them up & you are able to make them feel good & not embarrass them or humiliate them, which is what contradicting & arguing does. And sometimes the kids don't realise this. They realise what it does when it happens to them, but it just doesn't sink in somehow that it makes other people feel just as bad as it does them. Part of Love & part of what the Lord wants us to do is to try to lift people up instead of beating them down.

15. **IF THE ADULTS HAVE SUCH A HARD TIME DOING IT, YOU CAN'T BLAME THE KIDS.** But it needs to be a major lesson that they learn in Teen Training. It is a major difference that I'm sure the World can see at a moment's notice. If even I notice, & I have not been around System Kids, if I notice & see what a tremendous sample it is when they don't argue & contradict, & I realise, "Wow, that's unusual!", think of how outsiders must notice the difference between our Family children & the World's children. Since we ourselves as adults even have the tendency to immediately contradict or inne-

diately correct somebody, when the children have the grace & the Love not to do it, it really makes you sit up & notice. It's amazing! It's startling when kids don't do it!

16. MOST OF US DO IT TO SOME DEGREE, & IT'S SOMETHING WE ALL NEED TO WORK ON, NOT ARGUING OR CONTRADICTING. But when children don't do it, it's a real amazing sample to other people, to outsiders. It's the difference between having arguing, fighting, bickering, contradicting kids & kids that really love each other & cooperate & work together in harmony. It makes all the difference in the world.

17. (SARA: I THINK HAVING LITTLE BABIES OR LITTLE TODDLERS IN THE HOUSE GIVES THE KIDS A CHOICE. They can either get frustrated with them & argue with them or they can kind of laugh at the cute funny things they say & eventually learn to let it pass. They can either nag them & get aggravated about it or they can kind of laugh it off & let it pass & think it's cute.

18. (THE LITTLE GIRLS JUST LOVE DAVID, EVEN THE BABY! THEY JUST GO AFTER HIM, TO PLEASE HIM & GET HIS ATTENTION. Mary Dear tries to talk to David about big machines & says it all wrong & calls them the wrong name & David just goes along with it. He'll finally correct her nicely & say, "You know, it's not a "boadozer", it's a bulldozer." It's really cute. He's learned amazing patience with little ones. But even David & Techi who have a tendency to bicker among themselves have done much better & have especially learned that patience with the little ones, which I never had the advantage of in the System.)

19. YES, IT'S JUST A NORMAL THING FOR KIDS TO DO, WHICH CAN VERY RARELY BE CORRECTED WITH UNSAID KIDS. And then you grow up & you continue to have the same habit, you carry it with you & you bicker & contradict people. It takes a major change in your life to get over your bad habits of arguing.

20. I THINK THERE ARE A LOT MORE POINTS ALONG THIS LINE & A LOT MORE THAT COULD BE EXPANDED ON FROM OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE & MANY DIFFERENT POINTS THAT WE HAVEN'T MENTIONED HERE or we're not thinking of right now. It's a big subject that just isn't going to be sufficiently covered in one morning's talk, but it is something that you constantly have to be teaching & showing the teens—how to say things nicely.

21. WHEN DAD'S TEACHING & ASKS A QUESTION, & SOMEBODY ANSWERS & MAYBE THEY SAY THE WRONG THING, HE DOESN'T SAY, "NO! THAT'S NOT THE RIGHT ANSWER!" Neither does he just ignore it but he says something like, "Oh, that's an interesting answer. I see why you thought that." Or, "No, not exactly, but pretty close." The teens can learn to do that with each other too & they need to because it's really a part of lifting other people up & letting others increase while you decrease, by letting others have the benefit of the doubt & not embarrassing people or belittling them.

22. YOU CAN ALSO BRING IN ABOUT WHY ARGUING IS SO BAD & IS SUCH A BAD HABIT TO GET INTO. It's pushing your point & it's self-righteousness, thinking that you're so great & you're always right. It's all on the same subject & can be overcome with Love!

"DO UNTO OTHERS"—Another Aspect of Showing Love

Maria Ltr. No. 55, 9/86

"Let me be a little kinder,
Let me be a little blinder
To the faults of those
around me.
Let me love a little more!"



1. A BIG PART OF LOVE IS BEING POLITE & COURTEOUS & CONSIDERATE. When I talked with Techi about not drawing attention to David's pimples as it would embarrass him, she said, "That's a good lesson." It was like she didn't even realize it would embarrass & hurt him, & if she doesn't realize that, as exceptionally considerate & compassionate as she is, you can imagine that most children probably wouldn't think of it either.

2. IT WAS A GOOD POINT BROUGHT OUT BY THE JAPANESE TTC STAFF about how the adult Room Shepherds can be sitting together in the dining room & if they even look at a certain teen & then turn to speak to each other,