Illustration: Dave & Lisa

*Dave is a guy who prefers to get up early to begin his day, while Lisa prefers to sleep in.*

*Because it is summertime and each of their children also prefer to sleep in, Dave enjoys waking up around 7:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning and while the house is quiet, getting dressed, going to a local breakfast place, ordering breakfast and reading the paper.*

*From his perspective, the nice thing about this is that his family is getting to do what they want to do – sleep in and not be bothered – and he is getting to do what he wants to do – have some breakfast, read the paper, and have nobody bother him.*

*As Dave tells this story, on this particular Saturday he arrived home around 8:30 and as he expected, nobody was up yet. So he sat down and began making a general list of some things that needed to be done that day. Things like: the yard, pool, sprinkler system, run to Home Depot, etc.*

*While he was sitting there thinking on these things, Lisa walked in and said, “Good morning,” and began making coffee and asked if he would like some.*

*Dave said, “No thanks,” and noticed that inside of him he felt just a little bit of tension.*

*Lisa finished getting the coffee ready and asked, “How long have you been up?” and Dave said, “Oh, for a little while. Not long really.” And while he tried to be cool about it, he felt just a tinge bit more of tension grow inside of him.*

*Lisa sat down with her coffee and said, “What do you have going today? What’s on your list?”*

*Dave noticed that he felt an increase of tension inside of him and said something like, “Well, I’m not sure but I have to do the yard sometime, maybe run to Home Depot, maybe work on the pool a little. I don’t know. I might have to run to Radio Shack, too. I’m just not sure.”*

*Lisa sensed some evasiveness and vagueness in Dave’s response and for the first time, she said that she felt some tension inside of her. She said, “Well, the inside of the house needs a lot of attention and remember, we’re having our friends over for dinner tonight and so I thought that we would begin cleaning the inside of the house first. I’m not going to be able to get it all done by myself, so I thought that we would get started in about thirty minutes.” Lisa paused and then said, “Don’t you remember? We talked about this a couple of days ago.”*

*Dave said that their friends were not coming over till 6:30, that they had plenty of time to get things done, and that it would all get done.”*

*Lisa’s anxiety increased and with some agitation she said, “Well, what do you have to do that’s so important? You’re being so vague. Why don’t you just help me get the house in order and then whatever time you have left you can get your stuff done. I don’t know why this has to be such a production!”*

*This upset Dave and he said, “Well, you’re right. I don’t know why this has to be such a big deal. You’re the one making it that way. Not me.”*

*Lisa felt frustrated but she didn’t say anything for a minute. It was then that she noticed the newspaper in the chair beside Dave and since they don’t get the paper delivered at their home, she realized that Dave had already been gone and back that morning.*

*In recounting this story, she later said that she realized that it wasn’t the best timing but at that time, in her frustration, she said to Dave, “I wish you wouldn’t just get up and leave in the morning when we’re asleep. I don’t know why you do that.”*

*This really upset Dave and he said with a great deal of frustration, “What difference does it make? All of you are asleep. I could be here or be gone and it doesn’t make any difference! Good grief! I was back before anybody was up, anyway. Give it a rest!”*

*Lisa said, “I would just feel better if I knew that you were here. I hate for one of the kids to get up and then have nobody here to sit with them in the living room. I just don’t get why you have to get up and get out of here when you could sleep in. Gosh, you’re up early every day of the week. Why can’t you just be around here?”*

*Dave felt too frustrated to say anything. He also thought that it wouldn’t do any good anyway.*

*The end result was that they both felt frustrated and this frustration stayed with each of them the rest of the day.*

**What is going on between Dave and Lisa?**