

GOSSIP

Talking is a natural way to communicate with others. Often times a discussion leads to talking about someone and their actions or asking questions about someone and their thoughts. The definition of gossip is; rumor, hearsay, scandal, or chitchat. Majority of the time, we as people do exactly that when having a conversation, unless it is regarding a task, meeting, or objective. These are several questions you can consider in discussing gossip.

- What would you do if a friend of yours started talking about another friend or someone you trusted?
 - How would you react?
 - What would you say?
- Would you recognize gossip in a conversation?
 - What would you do?
 - Would you know how to discuss ways in which gossip is a sin?

Mentor

This would be a great time to share with your mentee your experiences with gossip. Share experiences when you were engaged, how you recognized it, and what you did afterwards.

These three areas are suggested “discussion starters”, biblical foundation, cultural values and activities to help the mentee in practical terms.

Biblical Foundation

- Psalms 34:13, ‘keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.’ (TNIV)
- Proverbs 11:13, ‘Gossips betray a confidence, but the trustworthy keep a secret.’ (TNIV)

- Matthew 12:36, 'But I tell you that people will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken.' (TNIV)

Cultural Values

Like many Alaska native cultures, the Cup'ig and Yup'ik people historically respected everyone. When discussion of others revolved around attitude or actions of someone, usually people would express their own opinions, often times discussion of someone's actions. Confrontations were rare, but if someone had an issue with another, they would talk directly with that person, avoiding gossip. Respect was a huge value for everyone.

Potential activities

Ask your mentee to intentionally be engaged in a conversation with a trusted friend. This conversation can be regarding anything just to get the conversation started. Ask your mentee to listen carefully of the other. Give your mentee some guidelines such as; to recognize, to discuss why, and closing the conversation avoiding gossip.